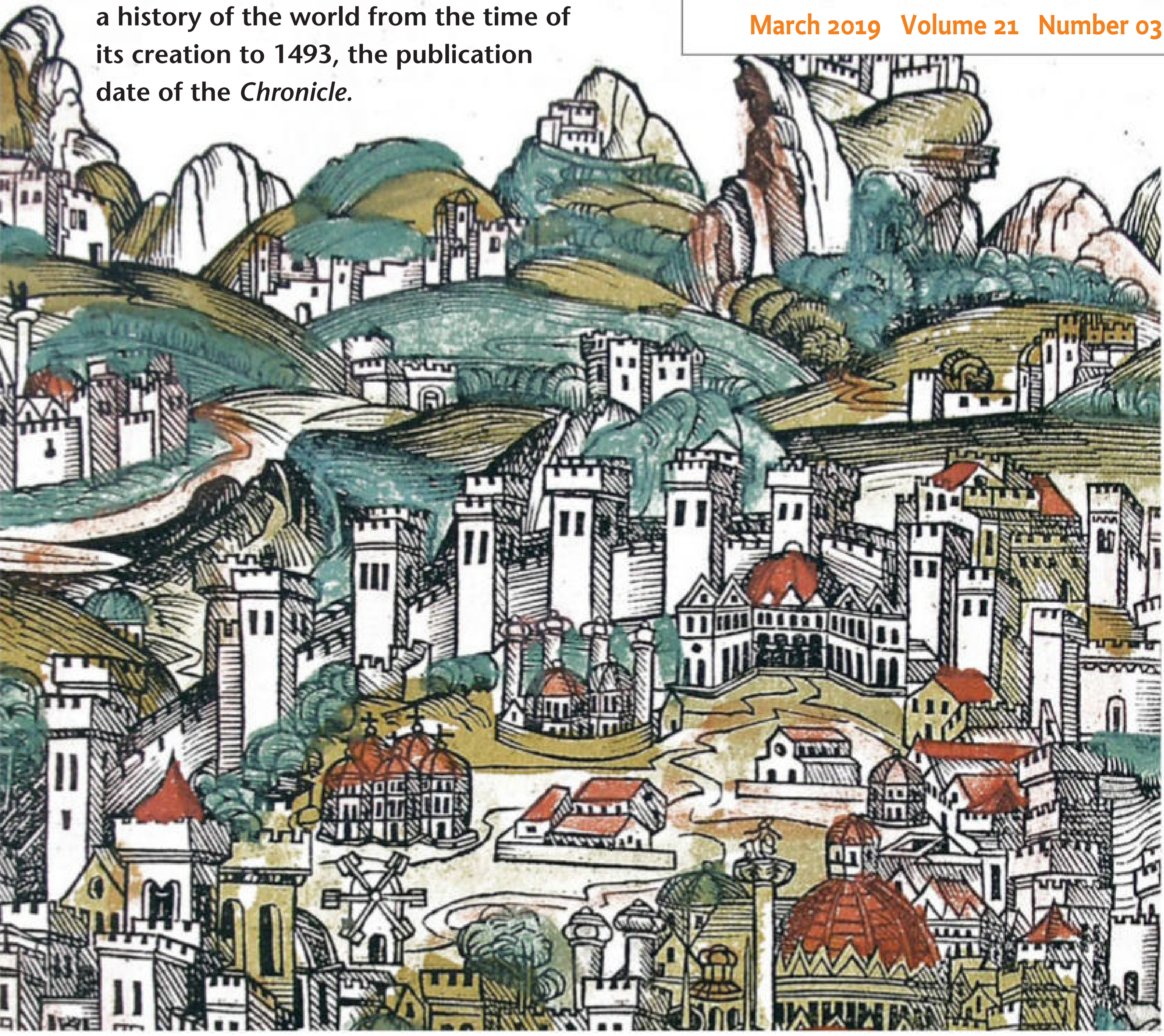
# THEN & NOW

March 2019 Volume 21 Number 03 cricketmedia.com $6.95

**THEN:** Here is Constantinople, as it was depicted in the *Nuremberg Chronicle*, a history of the world from the time of its creation to 1493, the publication date of the *Chronicle.*



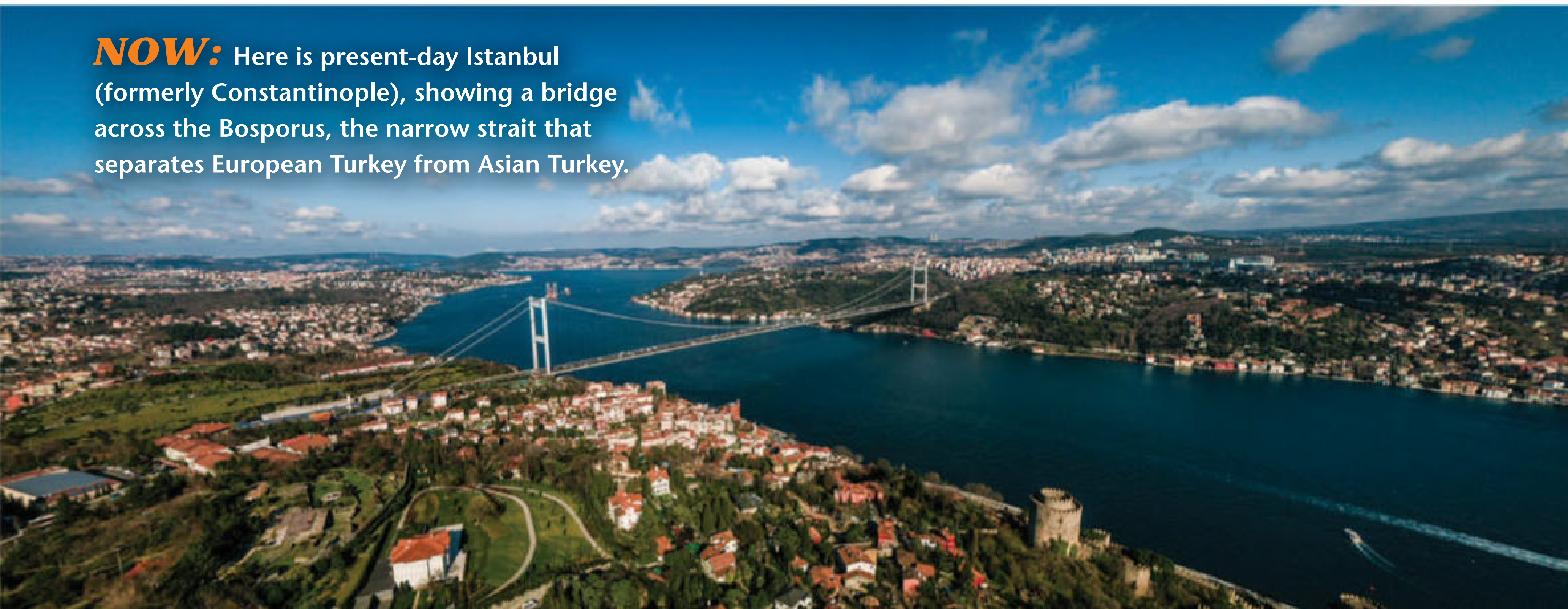
## WHAT'S THE SAME?

The city, as bustling as ever, is still seen as a link between the East and the West. It also continues as an international trading port and a commercial, cultural, and financial center.

## WHAT'S CHANGED?

Only portions of the wall remain, and they do not serve as protection against invading enemies. A bridge now spans the Bosporus. Electricity and other modern technological advances and conveniences are available.

**NOW:** Here is present-day Istanbul (formerly Constantinople), showing a bridge across the Bosporus, the narrow strait that separates European Turkey from Asian Turkey.

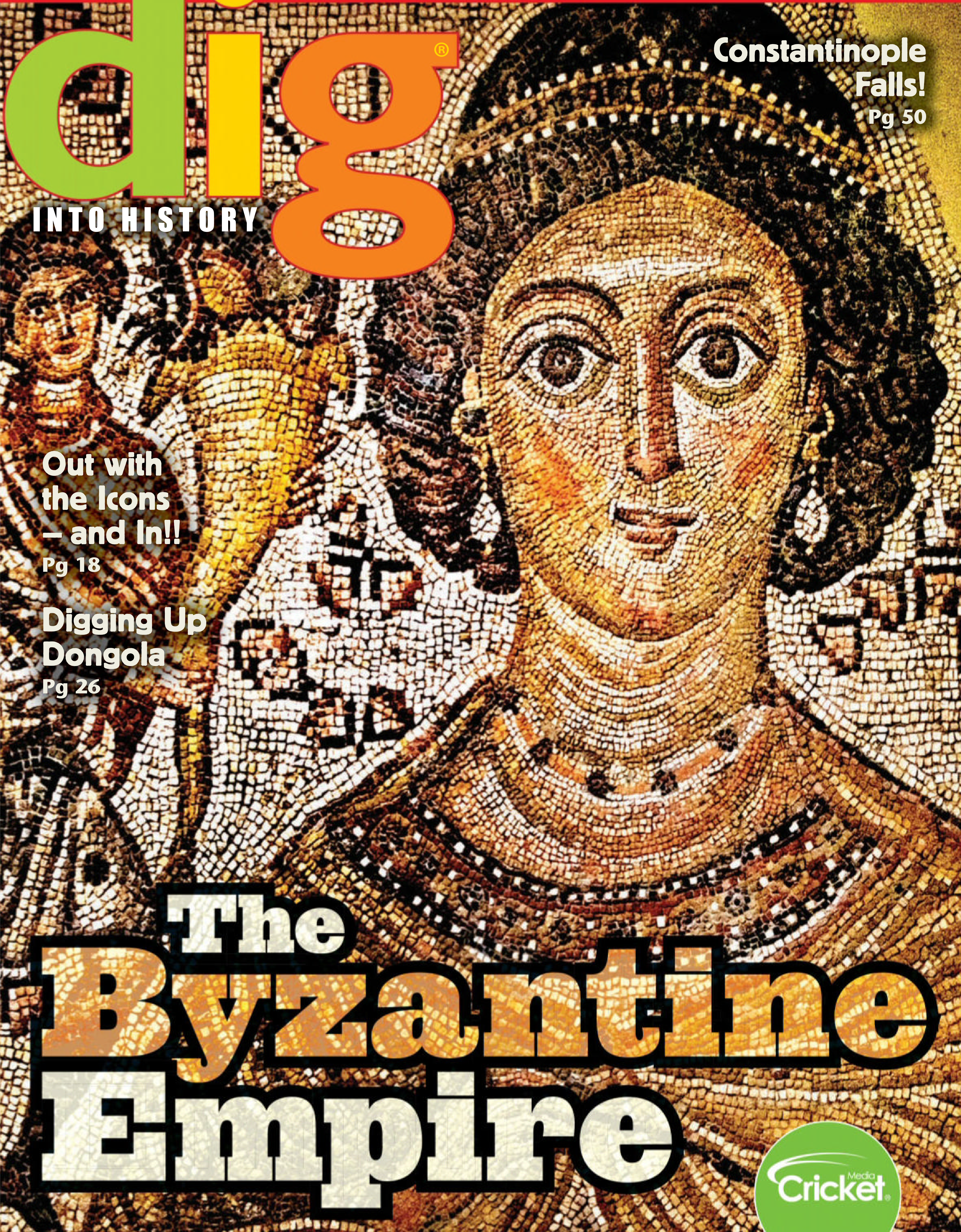


VISIT…

LANZAROTE
Caliente.COM

dig® INTO HISTORY

ONE GOLDEN AGE – AND ANOTHER Pg 38



Constantinople Falls! Pg 50

Out with the Icons – and In!! Pg 18

Digging Up Dongola Pg 26

# The Byzantine Empire

Cricket Media

## FEATURES

**2 The What, When, and Where**
*by Justin D. Lyons*

**4 And So It Starts**
*by Justin D. Lyons*

**8 From Greek to Latin to Greek**
*by Anthony Hollingsworth*

**10 Out with Paganism**
*by Anthony Hollingsworth*

**14 The Path of Islam**
*by Susan Douglass*

**18 Iconoclasts vs. Iconophiles**
*by Sona Hoisington*

**26 Old Dongola — At the Edge of the Empire**
*by Jack Cheng*

**30 The Influence of Byzantine Law**
*by Emily Abbink*

**34 Women's Rights**
*by Emily Abbink*

**38 A Golden Age and Then Another**
*by Emily Abbink*

**50 The Fall**
*by Justin D. Lyons*

**54 The Legacy of an Empire**
*by Regina Hansen*

## DEPARTMENTS

**7 Tales It Is!**
*by Sarah Novak*

**16 Fun With Words**

**25 Dig It!**
*by John Gordon-Swogger*

**33 Where We Are — Byzantine Empire**

**36 Did You Know?**
*by Sarah Novak*

**37 Strange — But True!**
*by Sarah Novak*

**45 Fun & Games**
*by John Gordon-Swogger*

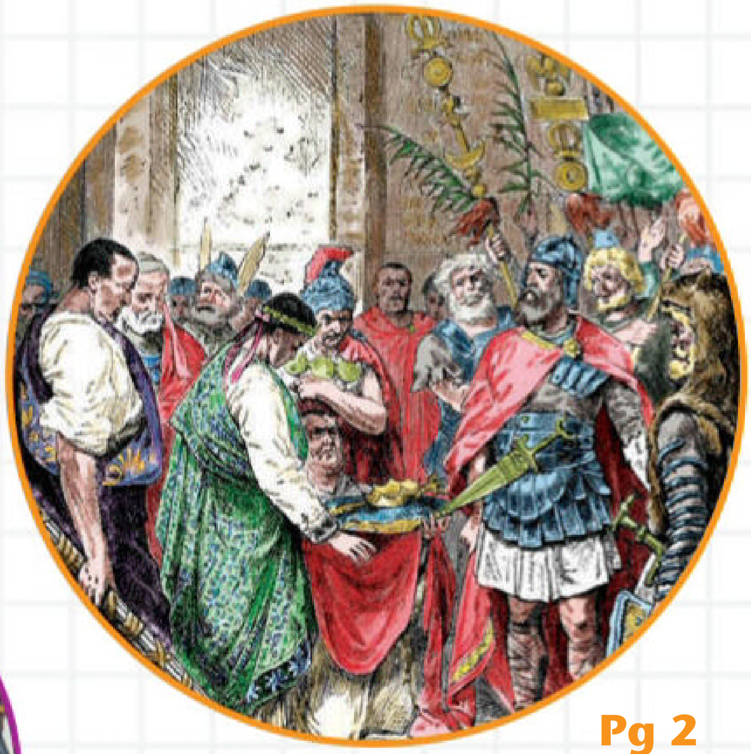
**47 Off the Shelf/On the Net**

**48 Ask Away!**

**56 The Adventures of Dr. Dig**

**57 Artifacts**
*by Louise Chipley Slavicek*

dig


Pg 2

Pg 10

Pg 28

Pg 38

Pg 46

Pg 54

Check out our
online teacher's guides at
WWW.CRICKETMEDIA.COM/
TEACHER-RESOURCES/

**EDITOR** Rosalie F. Baker
**ART DIRECTOR** Nicole Welch
**DESIGNER** Erin Hookana
**CARTOONIST** Chris Sabatino
**DIRECTOR OF EDITORIAL** James M. O'Connor
**PERMISSIONS SPECIALIST** Christine Voboril
**COPY EDITOR** Stephen L. Thompson
**PROOFREADER** Paula K. Neely
**EDITORIAL CONSULTANT** Naomi Pasachoff

## A Monumental Task

*DIG Into History* has a great Advisory Board — you can see their names on page 46. Some have written articles for *DIG*; some have introduced me to scholars, institutions, and organizations that have proved invaluable to presenting issues with the most up-to-date information on topics; others have guided me into areas about which I knew very little and helped me to see their relevance to the worlds of history and archaeology; many have sent suggestions for themes. For all this and more, I cannot thank each and every one enough!

So it was as I reviewed the list of suggested themes, with an arrow pointing to each one that had been suggested several times but not yet covered, that I thought, "Yes, it's time to cover the Byzantine Empire." I knew we had focused articles and sections of issues on topics related to the Byzantine period, but I had never looked at the centuries from a "Byzantine perspective." Which month was the question now? March 2019 — a good time in my chronological approach to choosing themes. It was the early summer of 2017, and March 2019 seemed eons away! But soon it was March 2018 and time to begin my research. I gathered a bunch of informational materials, a few books, the thoughts sent by Advisory Board members, and I soon felt overwhelmed. The topic was huge, more than huge, it seemed almost impossible for me to put my arms around it. "Slow down!" I thought to myself. "What would I like to know? Why am I even focusing on this empire? Who's important here? What contributions did Byzantine people make?" Ok – the questions were leading me closer and closer to an outline, a grouping of topics that would bring this period and its people alive for *DIG*'s readers.

I would start with a "Who, What, When" and then take readers back to the beginning, when Constantine names what is now Istanbul the "New Rome." What should come next? Well, that was easy – with Constantine taking control, there came the push to end persecution of Christians. But there also came the desire, as the centuries passed, to end belief in the deities the ancient Romans and Greeks had worshiped. Islam, too, was spreading across the area. As beliefs, laws, and customs mixed and mingled, the Byzantine Empire expanded. Ideas and traditions met and blended in with one another. A Golden Age arose, and then another. As I continued my research, it became clearer that to understand the present it really is necessary to understand the past. This issue on the Byzantine Empire would help to do just that! And so, *DIG* readers — enjoy this issue with me, and let it broaden our understanding of the world in which we all live today.

Rosalie F. Baker

–Rosalie F. Baker, Editor

## ABOUT THE COVER

What artistic beauty and elegance in this fragment of a Byzantine mosaic! The woman — with earrings, necklaces, and beads in her hair is Ktisis, a figure who represents the act of giving generously. Beside her is a male figure with a cornucopia, symbolic of abundance and having all you need. Above his head is a Greek inscription that translates "good." So with this great image, let us begin our journey to an Empire that is long gone but still influencing our world.

NOTE: In this issue on the Byzantine Empire, we are using the abbreviations B.C.E. (Before the Common Era) and C.E. (Common Era) and not B.C. and A.D. B.C.E. and C.E. are used presently worldwide and have no religious affiliation.

**LIKE US ON FACEBOOK**
**www.facebook.com/cricketmedia**

A PARENTS' CHOICE
Gold Award Winner 2017
Gold Award Winner 2016
Gold Award Winner 2015
Gold Award Winner 2014

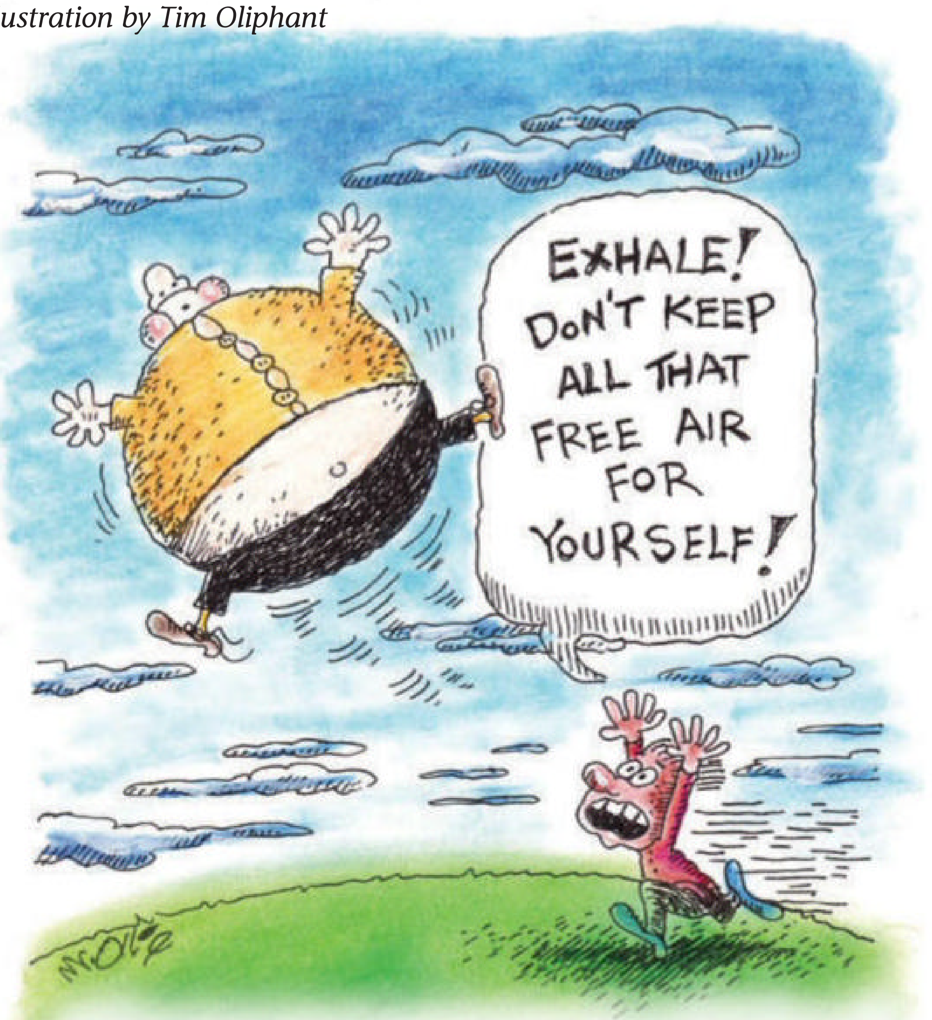
2012 Teacher's Choice Award winner

George Washington Honor Medal Award Winner

Indexed and/or Abstracted in: Children's Magazine Guide, Primary Search and Middle Search, Readers' Guide for Young People, Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature, Vertical File Index, and at www.cricketmedia.com

## MUSINGS

*illustration by Tim Oliphant*


EXHALE! DON'T KEEP ALL THAT FREE AIR FOR YOURSELF!
OLIP

These are common to all (and not capable of being owned): the air, running water, the sea, and the seashores.

—BYZANTINE EMPEROR JUSTINIAN I (527–565 C.E.)

OH, DID I FIND A GREAT PLACE FOR THE EAGLE EYE IN THIS ISSUE! CAN YOU FIND IT? SEE PAGE 47 – BUT ONLY TO SEE IF YOU ARE RIGHT!

### HELLO! I AM:
### MUDD THE MOLE

**FAVORITE PASTIME**
digging onsite with Dr. Dig

**FAVORITE WORD**
mud!

**BEST FRIEND**
Dr. Dig, of course, but love my pals Patty and Sly

**GOAL IN LIFE**
uncover an artifact that helps you readers understand why we dig at all

# The What, When, & Where

**Justin D. Lyons**

The phrase "Byzantine Empire" refers to the eastern half of the Roman Empire, In fact, this eastern section survived for 1,000 years after the western half fell to barbarian invasion and settlement. "Byzantine," however, is not the name the inhabitants themselves used. Rather, it was a term imposed upon them. They simply called themselves Romans, and theirs was the Roman Empire.

## A New Name

From the beginning of the fourth century C.E., the Roman Empire was divided into an eastern section and a western section. The west fell in 476 C.E., when the emperor, Romulus Augustulus, was deposed and replaced by a general named Odoacer (see illustration opposite). Odoacer, in turn, became the first king of Italy. The Empire in the east lived on much as it had. Eventually, its organization and society began to change enough that historians sought a new name to distinguish the new from the old.

The term "Byzantine" is derived from "Byzantium,"the name of an ancient Greek colony on the European side of the Bosporus. This strait connects the Black Sea to the Sea of Marmara and separates the continents of Europe and Asia. In 330 C.E., the emperor Constantine refounded Byzantium as the "New Rome." He then changed its name to Constantinople. As *polis* is the Greek word for "city," Constantine had named the city for himself: "City of Constantine." This fortress city would flourish as the capital of a vibrant empire for many centuries. Its long history, however, was not without significant challenges and dangers, both internal and external.

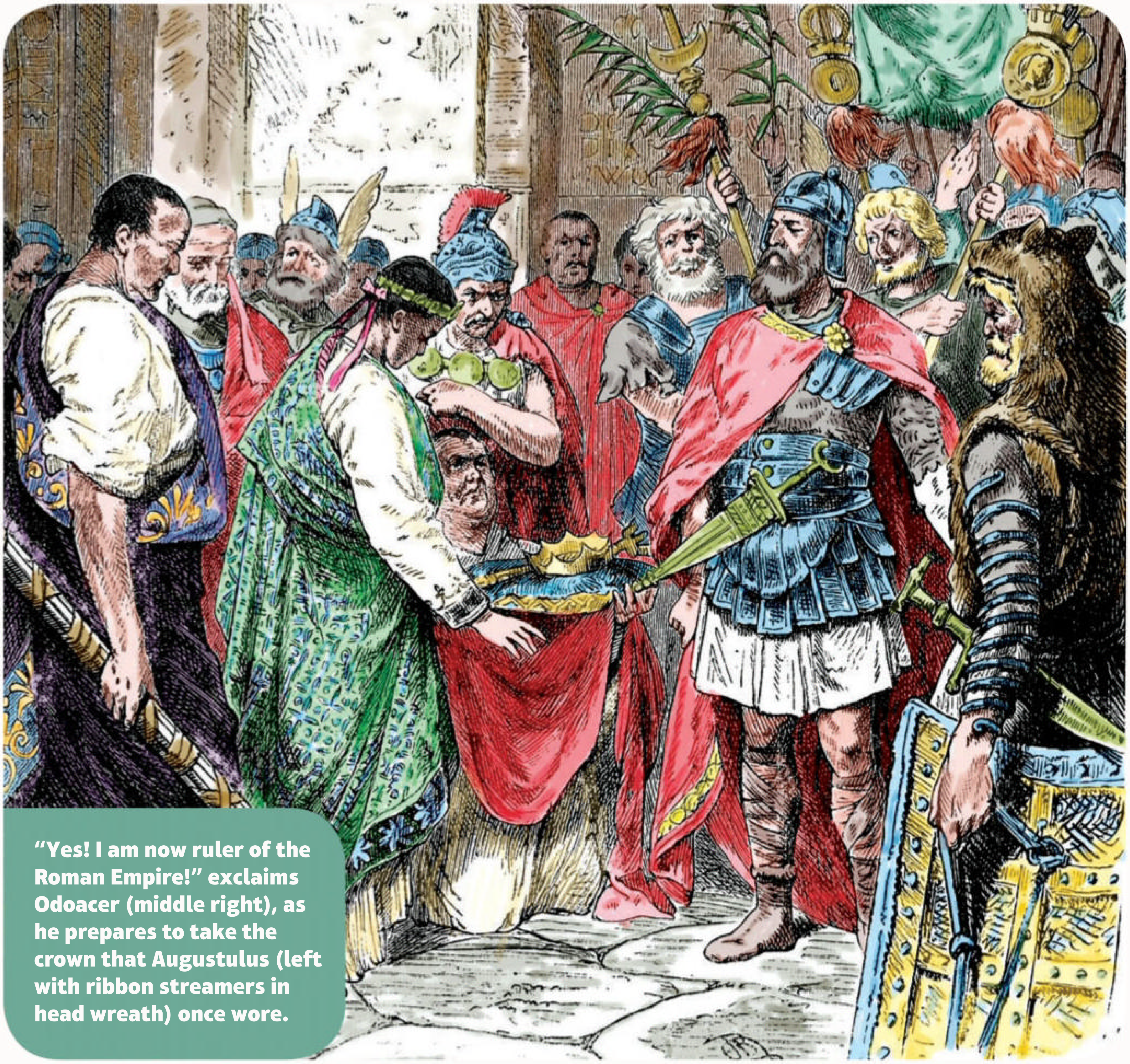
## A Melting Pot of Cultures

Culturally, the Byzantine Empire was multi-ethnic. It was home to Armenians, Egyptians, Greeks, Jews, Slavs, and Syrians, all of whom made their contributions. However, when Greek replaced Latin as the official language in the seventh century, Byzantine culture became increasingly Greek.

After the emperor Theodosius issued his decrees outlawing pagan worship in the late fourth century, the Empire became officially Christian. But disagreements concerning doctrine and worship persisted. Political and social discontent also disturbed the peace. In the sixth century, for example, Emperor Justinian I nearly lost his life

## The Site

Located on a peninsula, the site of Constantinople is guarded on three sides by water. To the south, the Sea of Marmara (called the Propontis in antiquity) meets the Bosporus, the strait that connects to the Black Sea at the city's eastern end. These waters connect to a horn-shaped estuary along the north side of the peninsula called the Golden Horn, a natural anchorage and harbor.



**"Yes! I am now ruler of the Roman Empire!" exclaims Odoacer (middle right), as he prepares to take the crown that Augustulus (left with ribbon streamers in head wreath) once wore.**

when opposing political factions banded together against him in uprisings. At the time, almost half of Constantinople was burned and tens of thousands of people killed.

### Threats from Without

Geographically, the Byzantine Empire originally embraced all the lands of the Eastern Roman Empire. Thus, it stretched from Greece to Syria and from the Black Sea to Egypt. However, the lands it controlled ebbed and flowed according to the external threats it faced. In the sixth century, Justinian I sought to recover the lost lands of the West, but his conquests did not endure long.

The seventh century gave rise to several aggressive enemies: groups of people from Eastern Europe and Turkey threatened the Balkans, while the rulers of the Sassanian Empire in Persia attacked from the east. Both these threats were ultimately eclipsed by Arab armies. United and inspired by Islam, these troops drove Byzantine forces back, conquered the empire's territories, and besieged Constantinople on several occasions. Nonetheless, the city endured until 1453 C.E., when the Ottoman Turks took control (see pages 50–53).

**Justin D. Lyons** *is an associate professor in the Department of History and Government at Cedarville University in Ohio.*

# And So It

When Diocletian became emperor in 284 C.E., he soon recognized the chaos that threatened to destroy his empire. Determined to address the problem, he decided to divide the lands he controlled into more manageable administrative districts and to share power with co-rulers.

## 'The Tetrarchy'

Diocletian's new system of governance had two senior and two junior partners. It was called "The Tetrachy," from the Greek *tetra* ("four") and *arkhein* ("to rule"). The senior partners, Diocletian and Maximian, were joint emperors and shared the title of *Augustus* (Latin for "honored"). The junior partners were called Caesars and were seen as the successors to the senior rulers. In addition to the administrative and military advantages this system offered, it was meant to provide for an orderly succession of rulers and to avoid civil war. Such was not the case, however. After the retirement of the *Augusti* (plural of *Augustus*), there were quarrels among the successors, and war broke out once again.

## The Chi-Rho

At the Battle of the Milvian Bridge in 312 C.E. (see image opposite), one of the leading contenders to be an *Augustus*, a general named Constantine, defeated his last rival for control of the western half of the Empire. According to his biographers, on the eve of the battle, he had a vision and heard a voice declare "In this sign, you will conquer." The sign was the Chi-Rho, a symbol of the Christian faith. Constantine had an elaborate banner bearing the emblem carried before his army. He also had the sign inscribed on his soldiers' shields. His victory convinced him that service to the God of the Christians brought success.

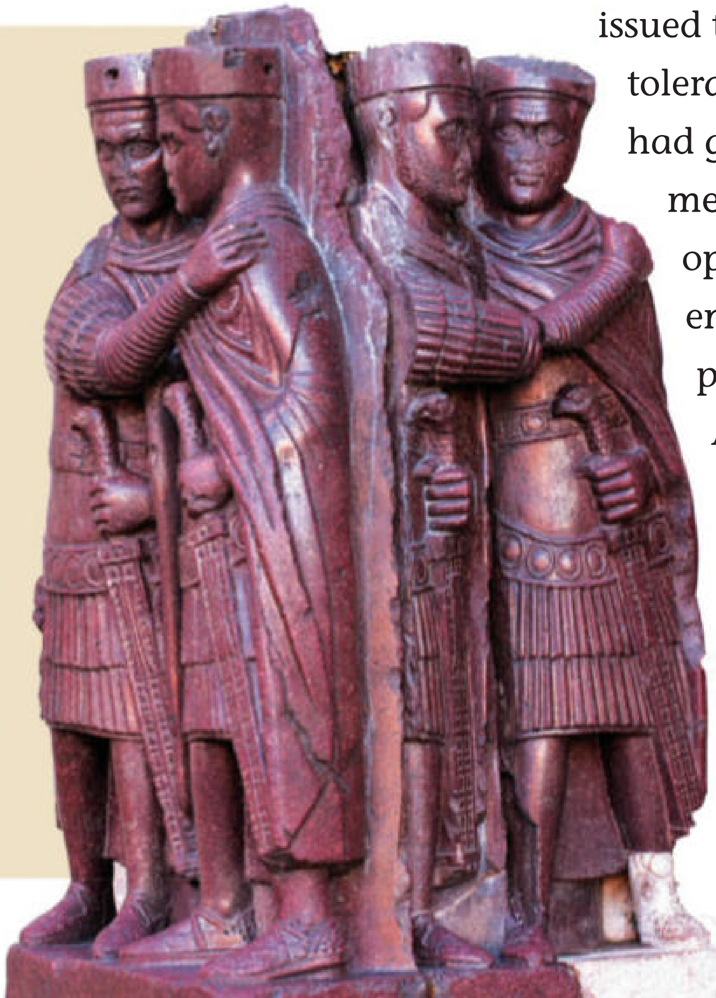
Constantine's theological shift would have momentous consequences for the Christian faith and for the course of the empire. In the following year, he issued the Edict of Milan, proclaiming religious toleration for Christianity. Thus, Christianity had gone from a religious sect whose members were persecuted and cruelly oppressed to an accepted part of the empire. What is more, Constantine publicly proclaimed himself a Christian. A new era had begun.

## Byzantium It Is!

There followed ten years of uneasy co-rule with Licinius, who sought to control the eastern part of the Empire.

### *Milion*

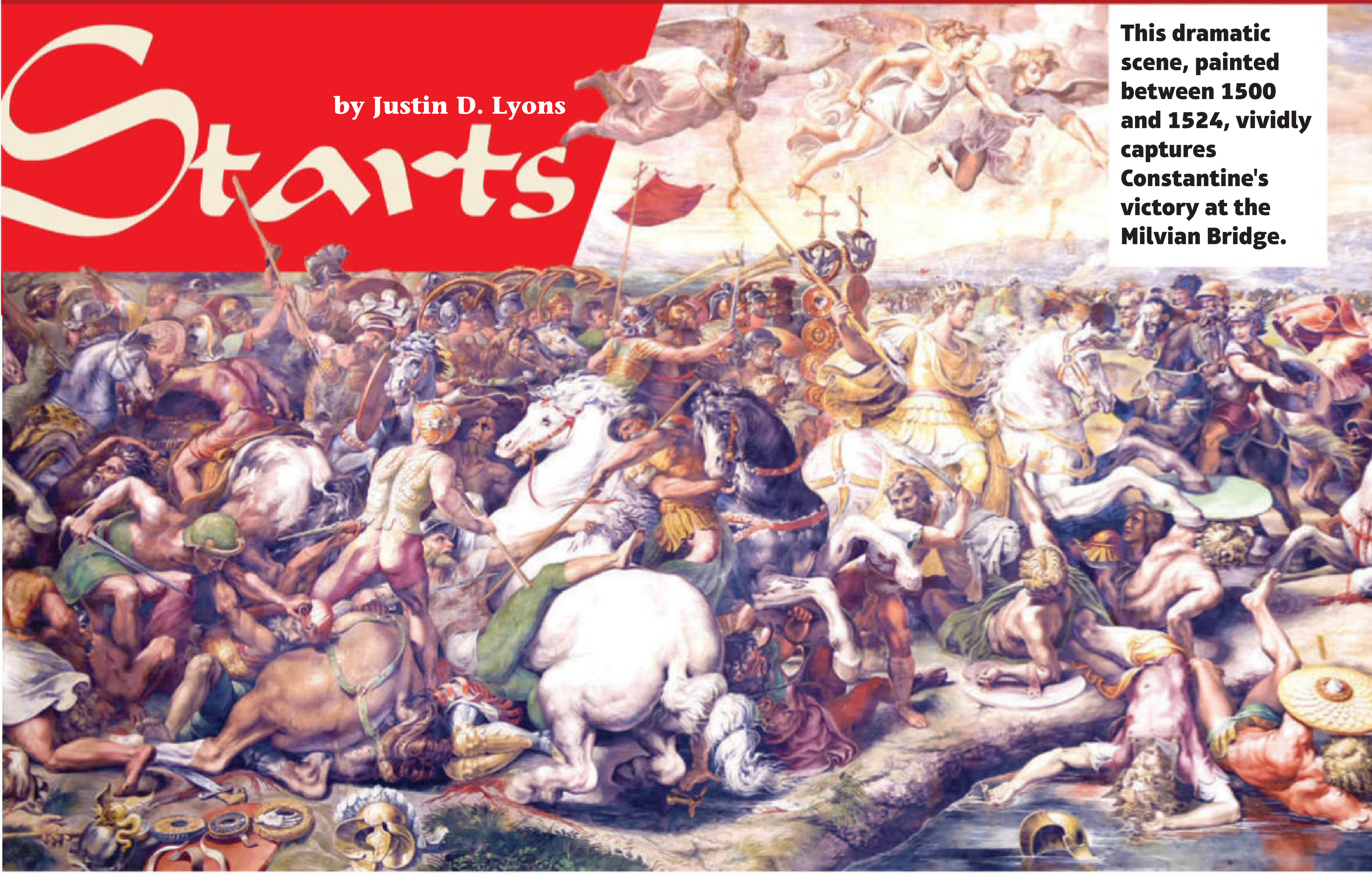
When Constantine established his "New Rome," he copied many features of "Old Rome." Among these was the *Milion*. It was from this zero-mile marker that the distances for all the roads leading to the cities of the Byzantine Empire were measured. The milestone served the same function as the Golden Milestone in Rome's Forum. Thus, it stood as a symbol of both continuity and organized power.



**This statue of the first four partners in The Tetrarchy was taken from Constantinople around 1203 C.E. It now forms part of a wall in Italy.**

# Starts

by Justin D. Lyons



This dramatic scene, painted between 1500 and 1524, vividly captures Constantine's victory at the Milvian Bridge.

Underlying tensions between the two led to the Battle of Chrysopolis in 324 C.E. Licinius surrendered and was later executed, leaving Constantine the sole ruler of a re-united empire. Seeking to strengthen his rule and the imperial structure, he undertook to give the empire a new capital and center of gravity. He chose the site of Byzantium on the Bosporus.

The site was well chosen. Close to the geographic center of the empire, it had an excellent harbor and was almost entirely surrounded by water. As a result, the city was ideally situated to become an administrative, commercial, and military hub. A massive rebuilding and expansion project began. The city was expanded to four times what the size of Byzantium had been. In addition, it was walled, gated, and ornamented to befit its new dignity. In 330 C.E., the city was consecrated as *Nova Roma*, “New Rome,” and came to be called Constantinople, bearing the name of the man who gave it new life.

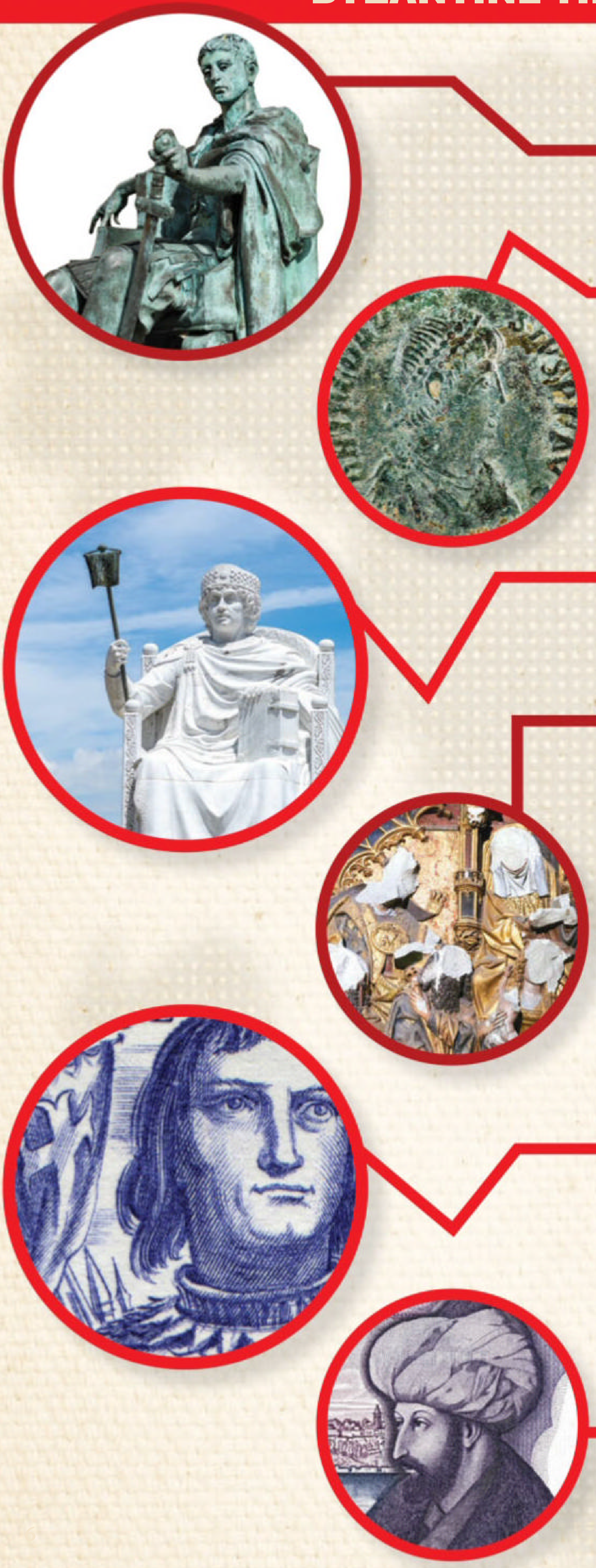
## What’s in a Name?

Byzantium was said to have been founded in the seventh century B.C.E. by a man named Byzas, the leader of colonists from Megara and other Greek cities. According to legend, the gods had ordered the Megarans to build a city “opposite the land of the blind.” This blindness referred to the inhabitants of Chalcedon to the east of the Bosporus and the fact that they, when searching for a new site to form a colony, had failed to see the advantages of land on the western shore — that is, the land Byzas chose as a new home for his people.

## Standing Tall

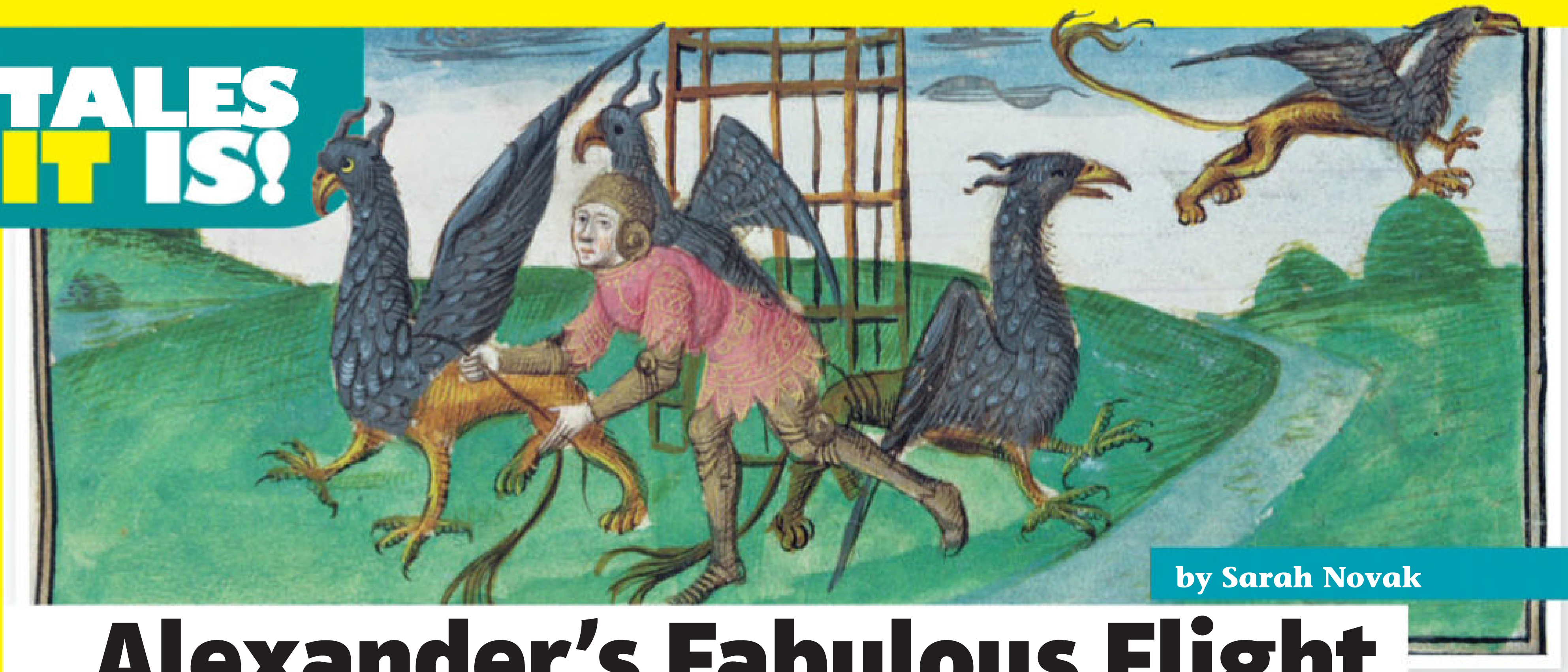
The strength and magnificence of Constantinople finds ample testimony in its subsequent history. While numerous enemies attacked it, many centuries would pass before any would cross its threshold in arms. A city of culture and beauty, it supported art, literature, and learning. The Western Empire would pass away, and still it would remain, floating upon waves of turmoil and war like an ark of civilization. Thus, Constantinople preserved the glories of the ancient world for later generations.

# BYZANTINE TIME LINE (all dates C.E.)



| | |
|---|---|
| 330 | Emperor Constantine I dedicates Constantinople as the new capital of Roman Empire. |
| 380 | Emperor Theodosius I declares Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire. |
| 395 | Roman Empire divided into Eastern Roman Empire and Western Roman Empire. |
| 527 | Justinian I becomes emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire. |
| 754 | Emperor Constantine V bans the making of religious images (Iconoclasm). |
| 843 | Iconophiles are given the right to worship religious images, ending Iconoclasm. |
| 1054 | The Great Schism between the Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches takes place. |
| 1204 | The Fourth Crusade — crusaders occupy Constantinople and divide the Byzantine Empire |
| 1261 | The emperor Michael VIII Palaiologis reclaims the Byzantine throne. |
| 1453 | Constantinople falls to Ottoman sultan Mehmed II. |

TALES IT IS!



by Sarah Novak

# Alexander's Fabulous Flight

—From the *Alexander Romance,* tales about Alexander the Great

*King Alexander III of Macedonia, better known as Alexander the Great, lived from 356 to 323 B.C.E. His empire was one of the largest in the ancient world. His conquests and travels were described — and exaggerated — in stories and legends for centuries. These tales and their Greek hero were popular throughout the Byzantine Empire. Medieval Persian and Turkish versions of the tales are said to have inspired Mehmet II, the Ottoman conqueror of Constantinople in 1453 (see pages 50–53). Collections of these stories came to be called the* Alexander Romance *(the word "romance" here means "a legendary adventure tale"). Many of the Alexander tales are fantastical, like this one.*

"The griffins are hungry, O king and commander!"

This was good news to Alexander the Great. **Griffins** with an appetite were essential to his next adventure. Alexander already ruled over much of the known world — Egypt, Greece, and Persia, so far. But that was not enough. Alexander and his mighty army still continued onward and eastward, seeking to extend his empire to the ends of the earth. Along the way they encountered strange lands full of wonders and dangers: giants, huge wild beasts, flaming birds, men without heads. Finally, Alexander came to a mysterious land of constant fog and shadow. Was this what he sought — the earth's outer boundary? There was only one way to find out. Alexander would explore the heights of the heavens and view the world below.

**Griffins are mythical creatures, typically with the head, forepart, and wings of an eagle and the body, hind legs, and tail of a lion.**

Alexander had captured a pair of griffins and underfed them for three days (illustration above shows Alexander capturing griffins). Now he yoked them together and attached them to a chariot. Once in the chariot, he held out two long spears with juicy hunks of meat on their spikes. The famished griffins flapped their wings and lunged for the meat suspended ahead of them, always just out of reach. Up into the sky they soared, carrying Alexander higher and higher.

Alexander looked down. Far, far beneath him was something that looked like a blue snake curled around a green sphere. He realized that he was seeing the earth encircled by the sea. But suddenly his glimpse of the boundaries of the world went dark — a warning to Alexander. He aimed the griffins' bait downward, and the chariot plunged toward the earth. Once safely reunited with his army, Alexander wisely decided not to pursue more aerial adventures!

# From Greek to Latin to Greek

by Anthony Hollingsworth
illustrated by Chris Sabatino

In the fourth century C.E., the new emperor, Constantine, moved the capital of the Roman Empire from Rome to a town called Byzantium. He then re-named it Constantinople, which literally translates as "city of Constantine" (see also pages 4–6). As can be imagined, the emperor's decision angered many Romans. Rome had always been the capital of the Roman Empire. It was the reason why the Roman Empire was called "Roman."

## Why Move?

Constantine had two very good reasons for moving the capital. First, his new city would be a Christian capital, not a pagan capital. The old families of Rome worshiped deities such as Jupiter, Minerva, and Juno and would not convert to Christianity. Secondly, the frontiers of the Roman Empire were in the east. It was in the east that the Romans were fighting and expanding their empire. Rome was just too far away to be an effective capital. Constantinople, Constantine decided, would therefore be the *Nova Roma* or "New Rome."

Constantine's new city lay to the east of Greece in modern-day Turkey. At the time, it was the Greek-speaking part of the Roman world, and almost everyone was bilingual. At home, families often spoke Greek, and the writings of early Christianity were in Greek. But anything sent from Rome was written in Latin. To be in the army or in public office, you had to speak Latin. Some imperial decrees, trials, and official documents, however, were written in both Greek and Latin, very much the way some forms and manuals today often come in English, Spanish, and French.

## Greek It Is!

Why was the Greek language so common in this part of the Roman world? The answer is easy: Alexander the Great. More than 600 years before Constantine moved his capital to Constantinople, Alexander the Great, the ruler of Macedonia and Greece, had conquered most of the known world to the east of Greece. In fact, he had led his armies to the borders of India and conquered every country in his path. As each country became a part of his empire, Alexander made sure that the people learned about Greek culture, Greek religion, and, most important, the Greek language. The fusion of Greek culture and language with other cultures was called "Hellenism." The term traces its roots to the name the Greeks had for their country — *Hellas*. Thus, it was Alexander the Great who "hellenized" the world and made the Greek language the official language of the east.

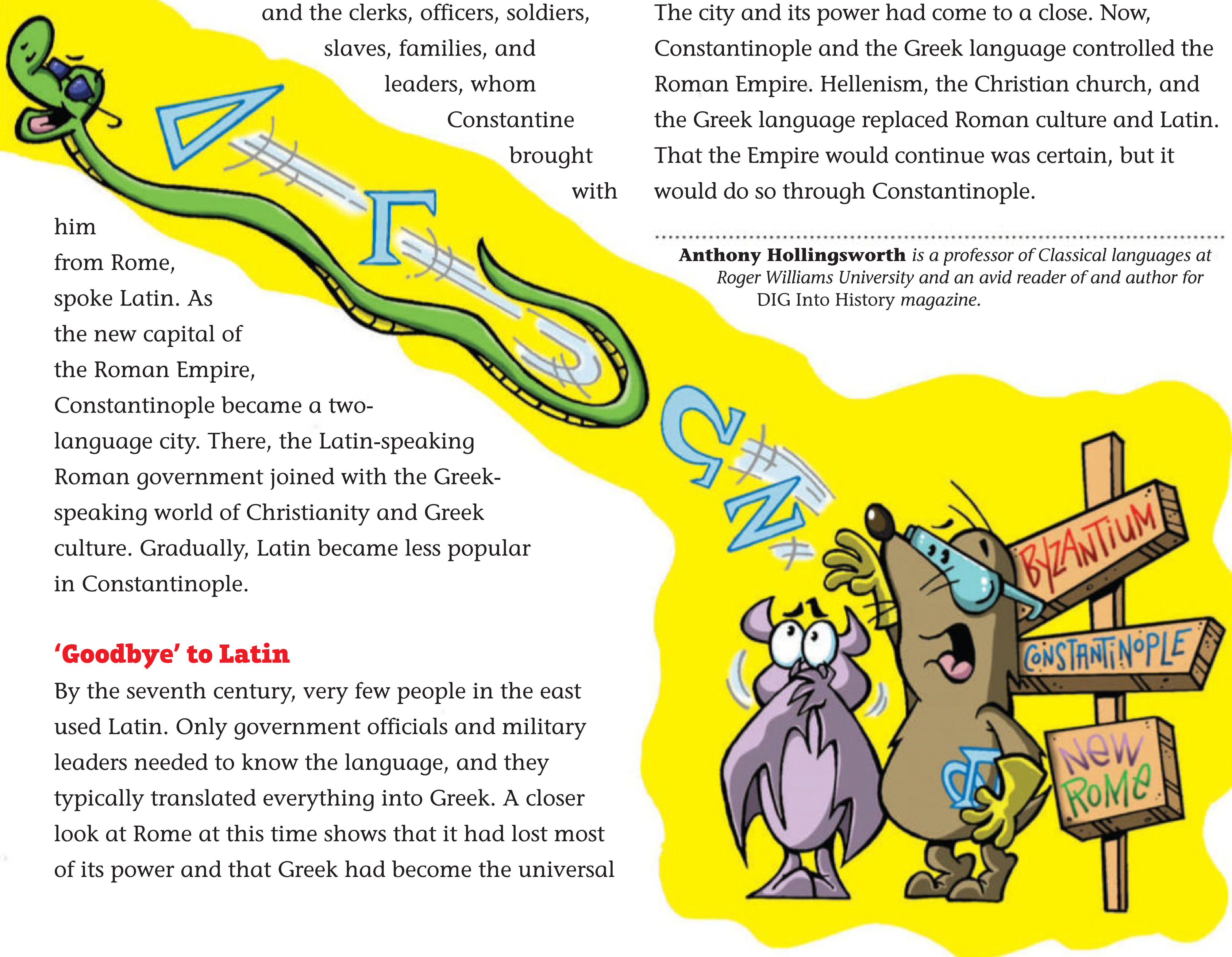
When Byzantium became Constantinople, the people there still spoke Greek. Even the people in the small towns around the city spoke Greek. In fact, the entire area spoke Greek. Latin remained, however, the official imperial language, and the clerks, officers, soldiers, slaves, families, and leaders, whom Constantine brought with him from Rome, spoke Latin. As the new capital of the Roman Empire, Constantinople became a two-language city. There, the Latin-speaking Roman government joined with the Greek-speaking world of Christianity and Greek culture. Gradually, Latin became less popular in Constantinople.

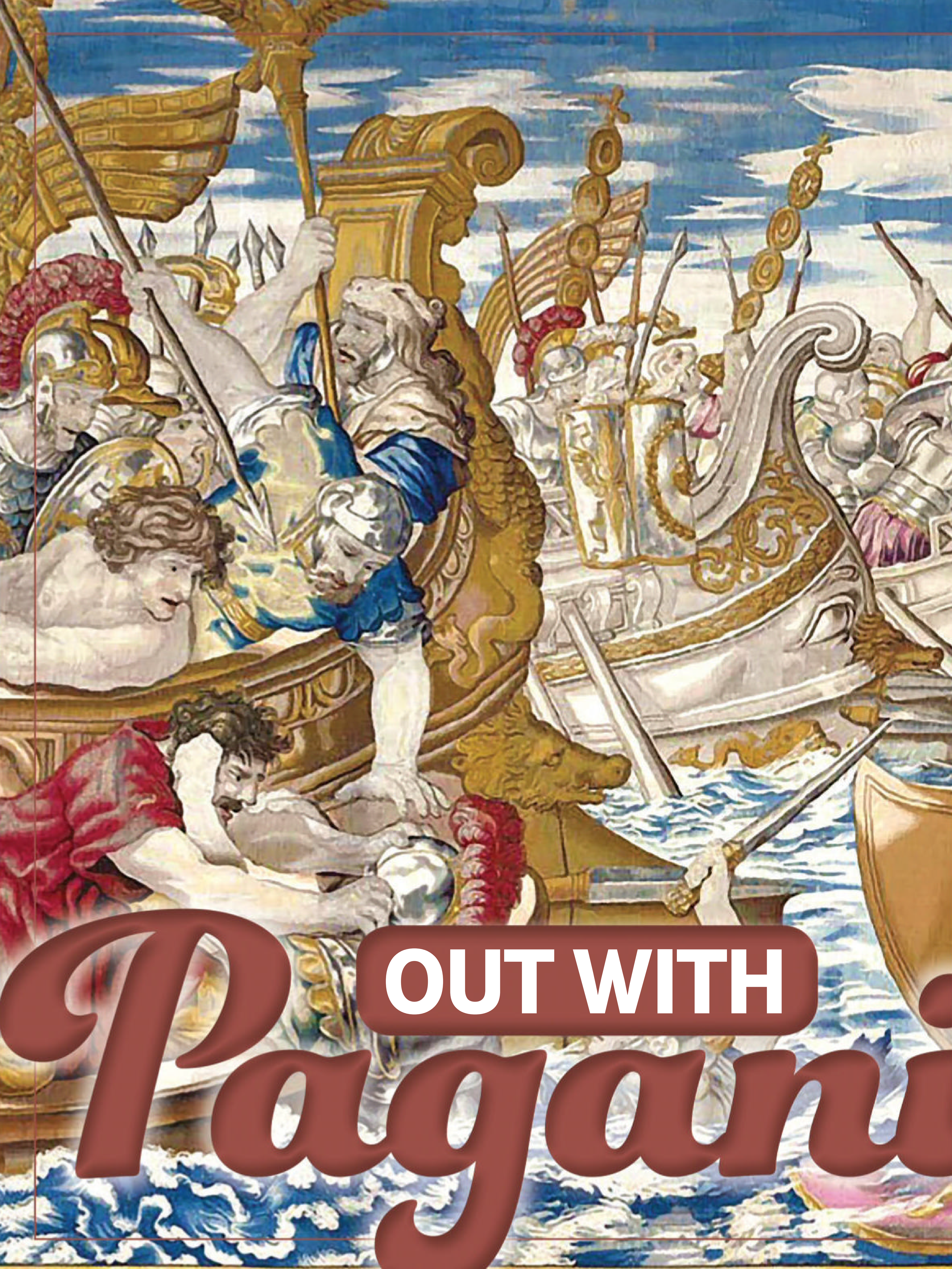
## 'Goodbye' to Latin

By the seventh century, very few people in the east used Latin. Only government officials and military leaders needed to know the language, and they typically translated everything into Greek. A closer look at Rome at this time shows that it had lost most of its power and that Greek had become the universal language in the east for both the government and the church. It was also true that Constantinople now faced many enemies coming from the east and the north. To survive, the emperor and generals had to communicate with each other quickly. As few people actually used Latin any more, writing and speaking it became a problem.

In 629 C.E., the emperor Heraclius decided that it was time for a change. The Romans had always called their emperors *Augustus* and *Imperator* (Latin for "commander"). Heraclius changed these titles and started calling himself and all emperors by the Greek word *Basileus*, which means "sovereign" or "emperor." This new title permanently changed the language of the empire from Latin to Greek. It was a change that had been happening over a long time period of time. No longer was anyone looking to Rome for leadership. The city and its power had come to a close. Now, Constantinople and the Greek language controlled the Roman Empire. Hellenism, the Christian church, and the Greek language replaced Roman culture and Latin. That the Empire would continue was certain, but it would do so through Constantinople.

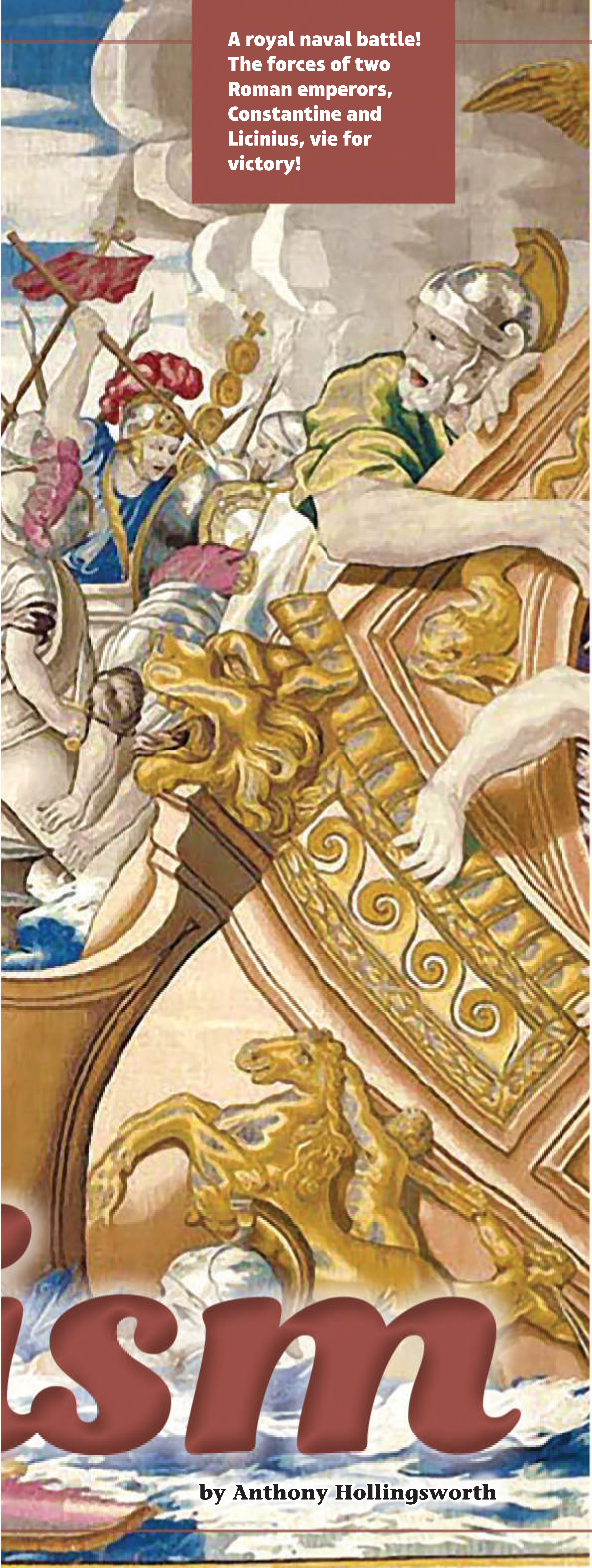
**Anthony Hollingsworth** *is a professor of Classical languages at Roger Williams University and an avid reader of and author for* DIG Into History *magazine.*





# OUT WITH

# Pagani



**A royal naval battle! The forces of two Roman emperors, Constantine and Licinius, vie for victory!**

# ism

by Anthony Hollingsworth

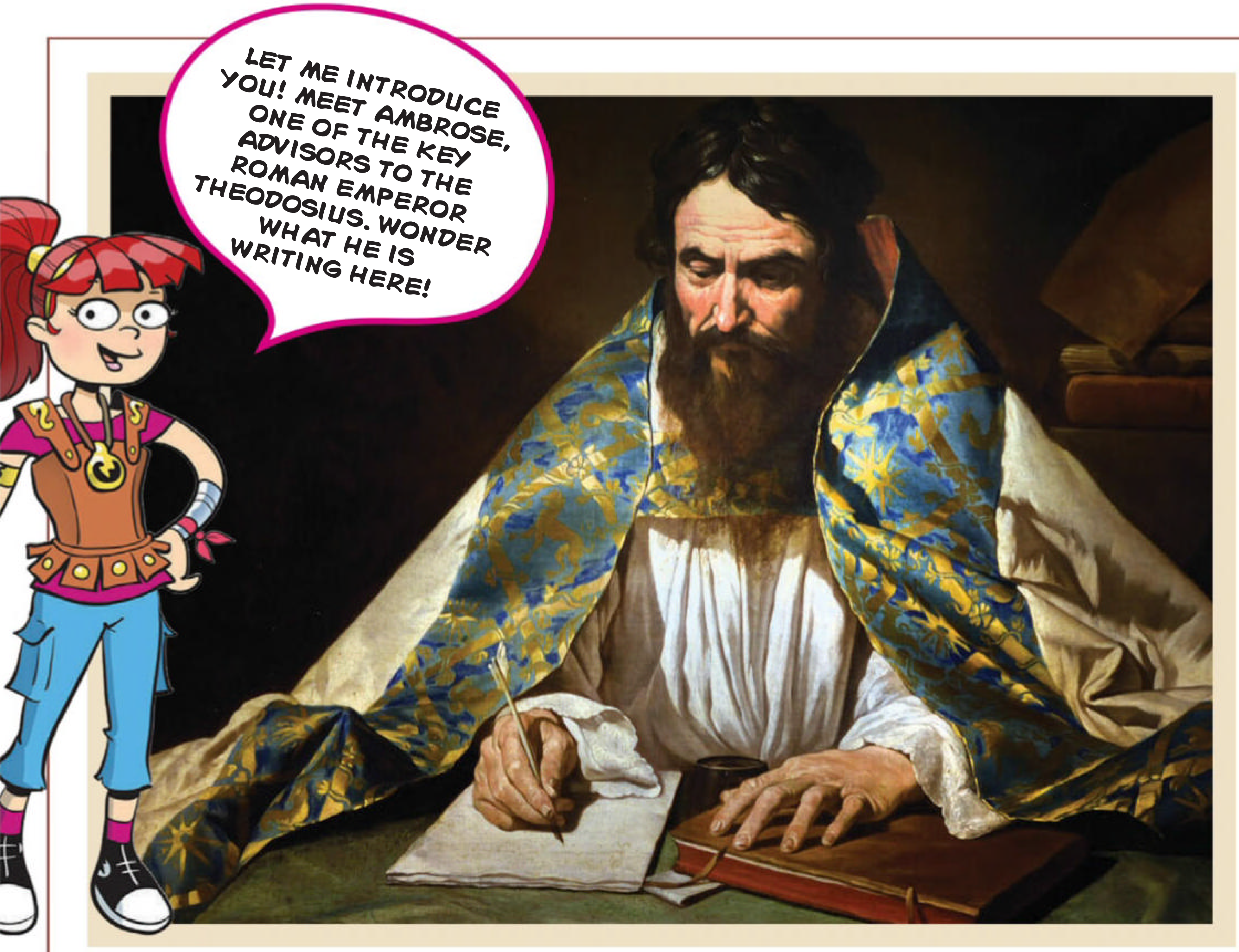
In 313 C.E., there were two emperors in the Roman world. One was Constantine, who ruled the western half of the Roman Empire. The other was Licinius, who ruled the eastern half. In the spring of 313, the two emperors publicly made it known that Christianity was to be allowed throughout the empire. For centuries, Christians had been killed simply because they were Christians. After 313, they could practice their religion openly, they could defend their religious practices at court, and they could even build churches if they wanted.

## AN END TO AN ERA

While 313 C.E. saw the rise of Christianity, it also saw the slow decline of the pagan religions. Worship of the Christian God gradually replaced the worship of the Greek and Roman gods. Neither Constantine nor Licinius punished pagans — that would come with future emperors — but it was becoming clear that the pagan religions would soon disappear from the ancient world. Their beliefs represented a threat to Christianity, and the Romans who still worshiped the old gods represented a threat to the new emperors.

After 316 C.E., the emperors Licinius and Constantine turned against each other, partly because of mistrust and partly because of religion. Licinius tolerated Christianity but favored paganism, going so far as to dismiss his Christian government workers and demoting Christian soldiers. Constantine took advantage of Licinius' dislike of Christians and attacked him. After many years of fighting, Constantine defeated and killed Licinius in 324 C.E. Christianity was now the dominant religion of the Roman Empire.

Constantine died in 337 C.E. — 24 years after he legalized Christianity. He left the empire to his three sons. During their reign, Pagan Rome felt its first major blow. Constantine's second son, Constantius II, ordered the altar of the goddess


LET ME INTRODUCE YOU! MEET AMBROSE, ONE OF THE KEY ADVISORS TO THE ROMAN EMPEROR THEODOSIUS. WONDER WHAT HE IS WRITING HERE!

Victory removed from the Roman Senate. Victory was a pagan goddess, and Roman senators had traditionally made sacrifices at this altar when they were elected. Sacrificing at the altar was a sign of the legal power of the Senate. When Constantius II ordered that the altar of Victory be removed, it was a signal that the emperor was weakening the power of the Roman Senate.

## THE 'OLD' RETURNS

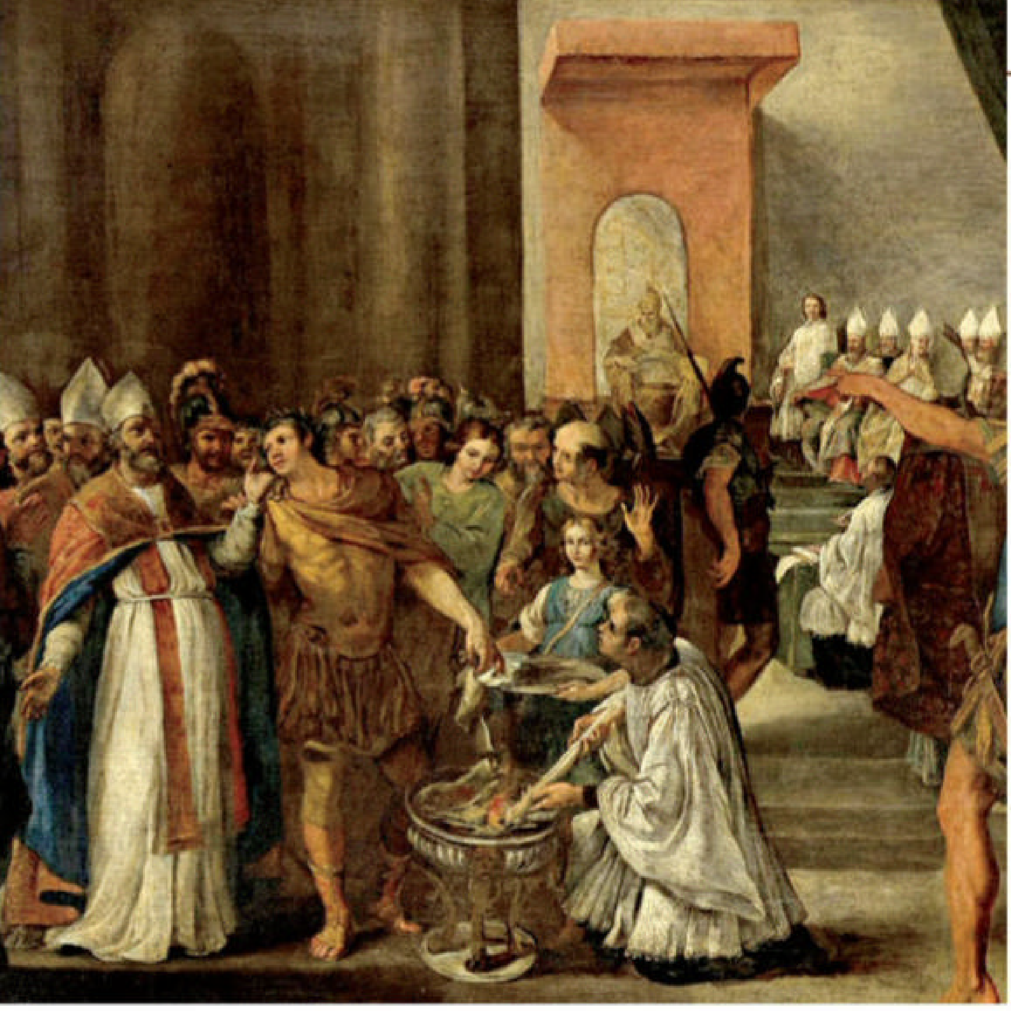
Several years after Constantius II's death, a new emperor came to power. He preferred the pagan gods to Christianity. This emperor, Julian, brought the altar of Victory back to the Roman Senate where it remained for several years until Julian mysteriously died in 363 C.E. According to some ancient authors, the Persians attacked Julian while he was marching to unite his armies. Others say that a group of angry Christians wounded the emperor. Whichever (if either) story is true, Julian died soon afterward. After his death, even though it was still possible to worship pagan gods, everyone knew the end of pagan religions was near.

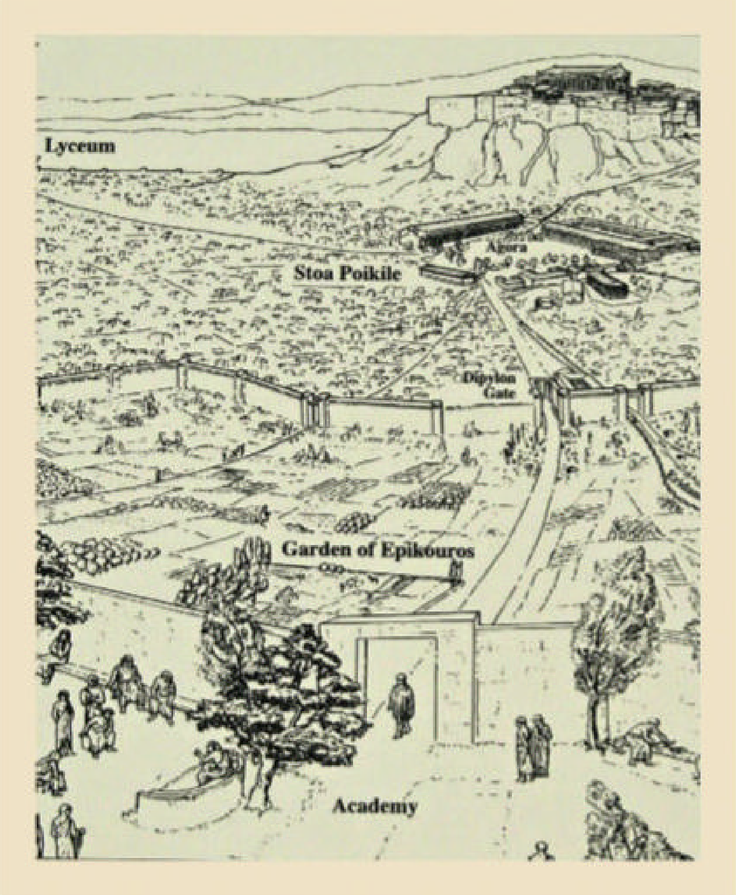
## BUT ONLY FOR A WHILE

Another blow to the pagan religions came in 391 C.E. under the emperor Theodosius. Guided by Ambrose (see above), the **bishop** of Milan, Theodosius proclaimed that all pagan worship in the Roman Empire was illegal. He also made Christianity the official religion of the empire. His proclamation said, "No person shall pollute himself with sacrificial animals; no person shall slaughter an innocent victim; no person shall approach the shrines, wander through the temples, or revere the

---

**Bishop refers to a senior member of the Christian clergy.**





**TOP: Book burning — as per the emperor's orders to destroy all Arian books.**

**BOTTOM: Labeled on this map of Athens (see the Acropolis at top right) are the great philosophical schools in Athens.**

images formed by mortal labor, lest he become guilty by divine and human laws." His law prohibited, under penalty of death, any sacrifices of animals or wine anywhere in the cities or in the country. Even a simple prayer at a pagan statue was punishable by loss of property. Theodosius and Ambrose wanted paganism to disappear forever.

But paganism was not the only target of these laws. Theodosius also punished Christians who practiced the wrong forms of Christianity. For many years, Christians in the northern parts of the empire had practiced a form of Christianity called Arianism. Unlike the Christianity of Theodosius, Arians believed that Jesus was not God the father, but the son of God. They said that the two were not the same person. While Arianism had been popular in the empire for many years, the new emperors believed that God and Jesus were equal. If you believed in Arianism and did not convert, you were punished.

## A BAN ON CURRICULUM

The final blow to the pagan religions came in 529 C.E., when Justinian I was emperor. At the time, there were still Romans who worshiped the pagan gods. Those who were especially troublesome for emperors were the educated Romans, including philosophers, who still taught and studied beliefs that were pagan in nature.

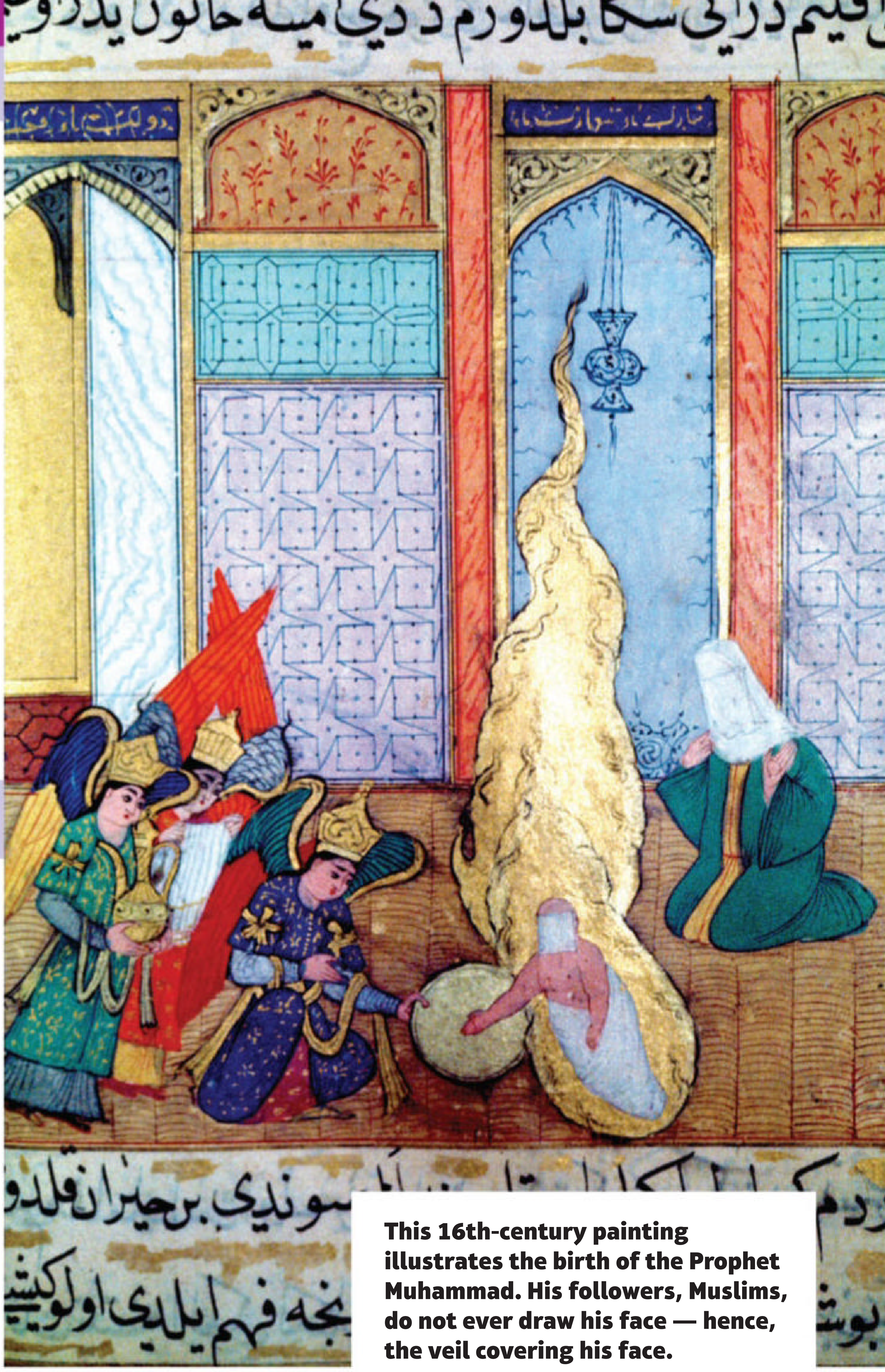
Among the pagan philosophers whose works were still being taught were Plato and Plotinus. For them, the world in which humans live was not real. Rather, they said, it was only a shadow of the real world. Where was the real world, then? Somewhere else and in a place that came from the one true source. For Plato, Plotinus, and the philosophers and students who followed them, this one true source was not necessarily the Christian God. Justinian disagreed. He forbid schools to teach such possibilities and closed the great philosophical schools in Athens (map at left locates several).

## A MEMORABLE YEAR

The rise of Christianity and the fall of the pagan religions lasted for many centuries. It is a story of religion, politics, power, and philosophy. When Justinian closed the philosophical schools at Athens, he destroyed the last remnants of pagan religions. So devastating was his decree that shut down these schools, that even today, historians generally agree that 529 C.E. marks the end of classical antiquity.

# The Path of Islam

by Susan Douglass



This 16th-century painting illustrates the birth of the Prophet Muhammad. His followers, Muslims, do not ever draw his face — hence, the veil covering his face.

According to Islamic beliefs, Prophet Muhammad was born in 570 C.E. (see image at right), in the city of Mecca (also spelled Makkah) in the Arabian Peninsula. He died in the city of Medina (also spelled Madinah) in 632. Although remote and surrounded by desert, both cities lay on important trade routes between the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea. Arabic-speaking merchant caravans crisscrossed these routes carrying precious goods imported from Indian Ocean ports, such as incense, spices, and silks. The goods arrived in ships that were carried to southern Arabia by the monsoon winds. These luxury goods were in high demand in the lands on the Mediterranean coast that were part of the Byzantine Empire.

In direct competition with the Byzantines were traders from the neighboring Sassanian Empire. Both empires had interests on the edges of the Arabian Peninsula. Neither, however, carried out much trade in or had much influence on communities in the harsh interior. Rather, they had to rely on Arab trading caravans.

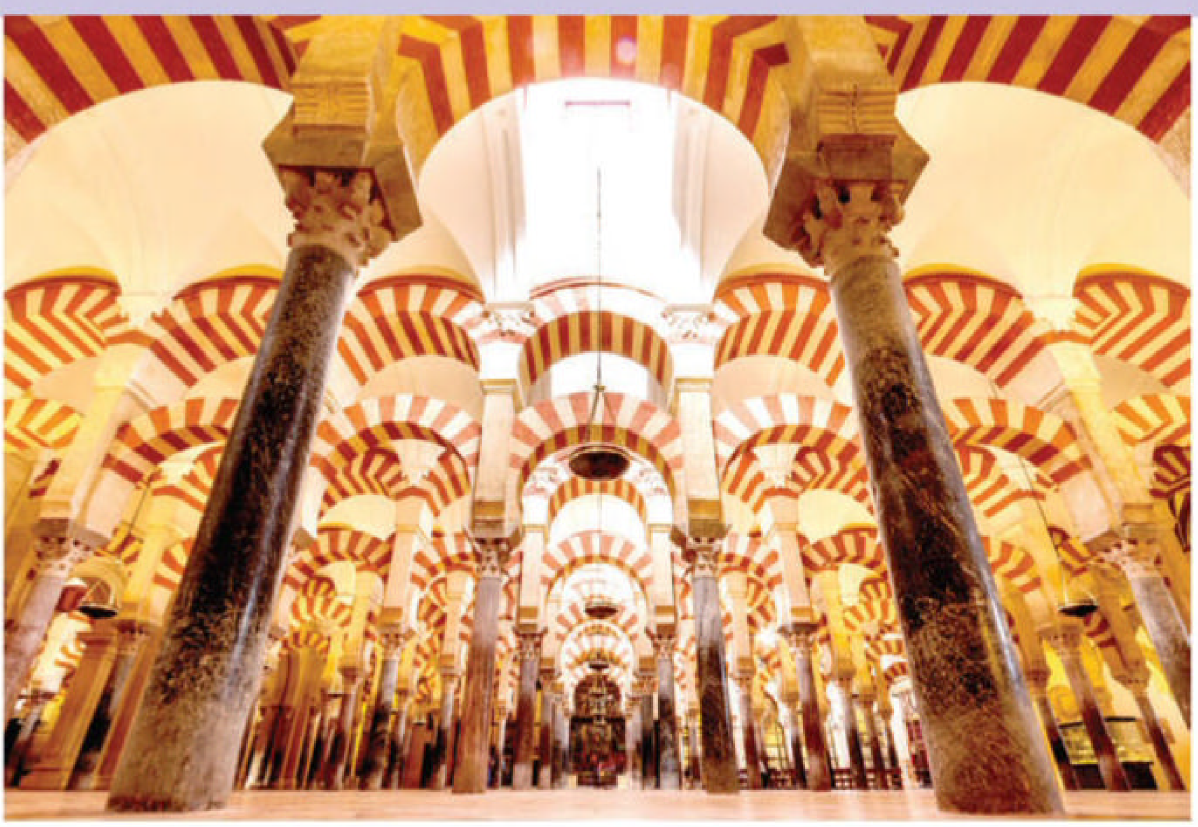
The rise and spread of Islam during and after the life of Muhammad began with the message that Muslims believe was revealed by the angel Gabriel to Muhammad from

God (called Allah in Arabic) over a period of 23 years. That message — an oral and later written book — is called the Qur'an. It contains the teachings of Islam.

## From Persecuted to In Control

Islam did not arise without a struggle. The central message of Islam is the belief in one God who is the Creator and the obligation to worship and live a pious life. When Muhammad first made his teachings public, his tribe, the Quraysh, preferred to worship many deities. The Quraysh considered the worship of many gods to be a pillar of their power over the city of Mecca, the surrounding tribes, and the caravan routes. For this reason, they sought to discourage people from following Muhammad. Their actions caused Muhammad and his followers to flee north to the city of Medina.

The migration to Medina marks a new phase in the rise of Islam. It was there that the Muslims established a community, along with a set of rules. Mecca, meanwhile, saw Medina as a dangerous challenge to its power and launched military campaigns against Medina. The Quraysh were defeated, and Muhammad took the city of Mecca.



**Isn't this amazing! Just imagine the building skills involved! These Islamic-style double-stone arches now grace a cathedral in Cordoba, Spain. They date to 987 C.E. and were once part of the city's Great Mosque.**

After the death of Muhammad in 632 C.E., his successors led campaigns to carry Islam to the rest of Arabia and beyond. By 660, Arab conquests extended from Central Asia to North Africa.

## A Strong Influence

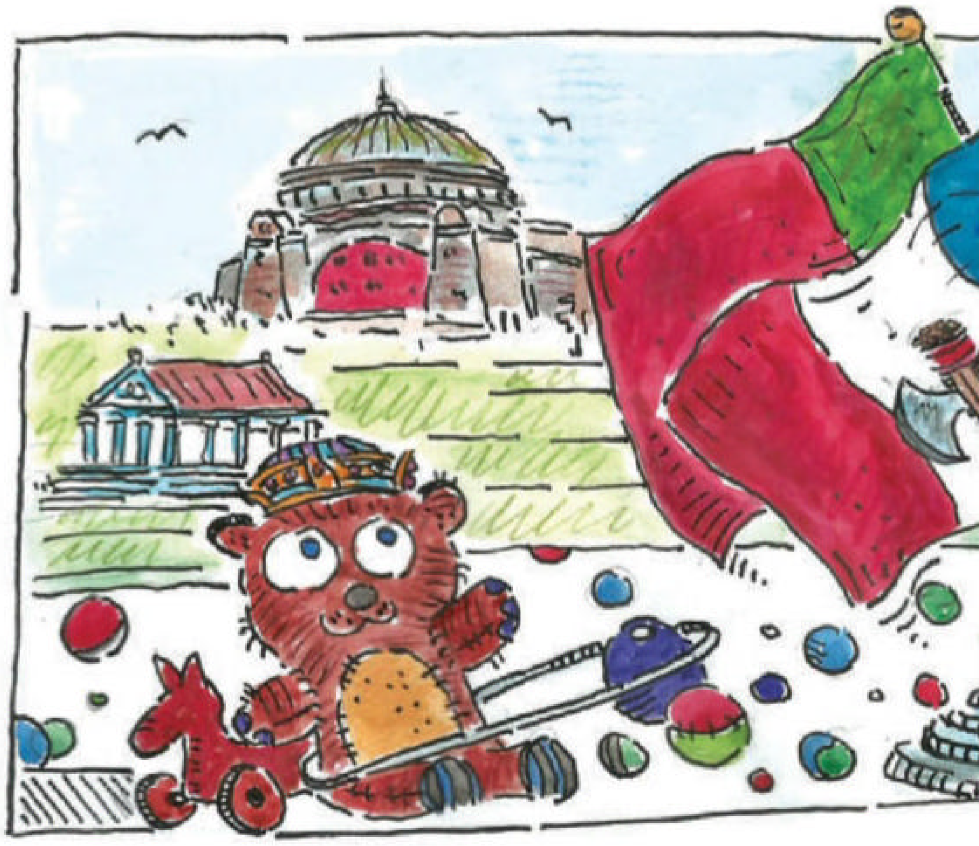
The spread of Islam throughout these regions proceeded slowly. But, as the centuries passed, the various peoples living in this region shared religious and other ideas. In doing so, they greatly influenced one another. A culture arose that came to be called Islamic, but included contributions from all the peoples of the region.

The heritage of the Sassanian and Byzantine civilizations enriched the cultural life of the Mediterranean lands at the time. When Islam arose, its arts, architecture, and religious and philosophical ideas brought together the classical learning of many centuries and many lands. Over time, both competition and exchange marked the relationship between Muslim and Byzantine rulers and their people. Military campaigns along the borders did keep tensions high. However, diplomatic exchanges, trade, and shared cultural activities such as the translation of books from Greek into Arabic brought more lasting results. These can be seen in advances in science, art, architecture (see above), and literature that enriched world civilization.

**Susan Douglass**, *a curriculum writer for online and print resources for teachers on Islam and world history, is a historian who directs the K-14 Education Outreach program at the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, where she also conducts workshops nationally for the Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding.*

# FUN WITH WORDS

## WORD ORIGINS



Artist Tom Lopes has incorporated several of the words/expressions highlighted in this section into his illustration. We have labeled one. Can you find others? See page 47 for the answers.

**Empire** Here's a term with a very simple story. It traces its origin to *imperium*, the Latin word the ancient Romans used to mean "power, command, authority." A look at the word "empire" in the Romance Languages (the languages that derive from Latin) shows that *imperium* definitely held sway over all: *empire* (French), *impero* (Italian), *imperio* (Portuguese), *imperiu* (Romanian), and *imperio* (Spanish).

**Enemy** Here's another word with a simple story. It derives from the Latin *inimicus* ("unfriendly"). But, let's dig a bit more into this term's etymology (origins of words). Dissecting the Latin inimicus, we find that it is a combination of two Latin words: the prefix *in* ("not") and noun *amicus* ("friend"). Now, let's follow through on the use of the prefix *in*. What often happens it that the "n" changes to become a letter identical to the first letter of the word it is negating. Here are some simple examples, with the "positive" word in green and the "negative" one in red: legal (illegal), mobile (immobile), numerable (innumerable), and reconciliable (irreconciliable).

## BE INVENTIVE

M E T Y A J L P

Use the letters above to create a word you would like to add to the dictionary of the English language. Email your word and its definition to *dig@cricketmedia.com* or mail it to: My Word, *DIG* Magazine, 70 East Lake Street, Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60601. We will print some of the most creative and interesting in an upcoming issue of *DIG Into History*.

THAT IS A GREAT WORD, PEPPER! THANKS SO MUCH FOR SHARING! AND – READERS – HOW ABOUT INCLUDING PEPPER'S WORD IN A CONVERSATION SOMETIME!

Hello,

My name is Pepper. I am in second grade. My mom is letting me use her phone to send you my word from the April *DIG* magazine.

My word is:

**aliytegm**

It means: a thread-like material that will harden into unbreakable steel over the fire.

Empire
LOPES

## HOW MANY?

How many words can you make with the letters used to form the word **Byzantine?**

Here's one to get you started: **tin**

Send your words to the address next to Gil in the orange circle below!

## WORD STORIES

**Intrigue** And there certainly has been plenty of "secret planning to harm or deceive people" in history. So, what is the root of this word? English first used it in the 1500s as a verb meaning "to deceive, to trick." But English had just adopted the French word, keeping the same spelling and meaning. And French had done the same with the Italian verb *intrigare*, just adapting it only a bit. It was Italian that made some adjustments to the Latin *intricare* ("to entangle, to embarrass"). So what had Latin done? Well, the Romans, the speakers of Latin, had combined their preposition *in* ("in") with their noun *tricae* ("tricks, toys, hindrances"). Quite a journey, don't you think?

**Medieval** The roots here are simple: *medius* (Latin for "middle") and *aevum* ("age"). The English definition is just as simple: "pertaining to the Middle Ages." But what are the Middle Ages — definitely a phrase that humans through history have used to represent a period between two other periods? For the purposes of this issue about the Byzantine Empire, medieval is quite appropriate as historians often use the adjective to mark the time between the fall of the Roman Empire in the West in 476 C.E. and the fall of Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire, in 1453.

## WRITE US!

dig@cricketmedia.com

CALLIOPE/DR.DIG, 70 East Lake Street,
Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60601
Or have your parent/legal guardian
email: dig@cricketmedia.com

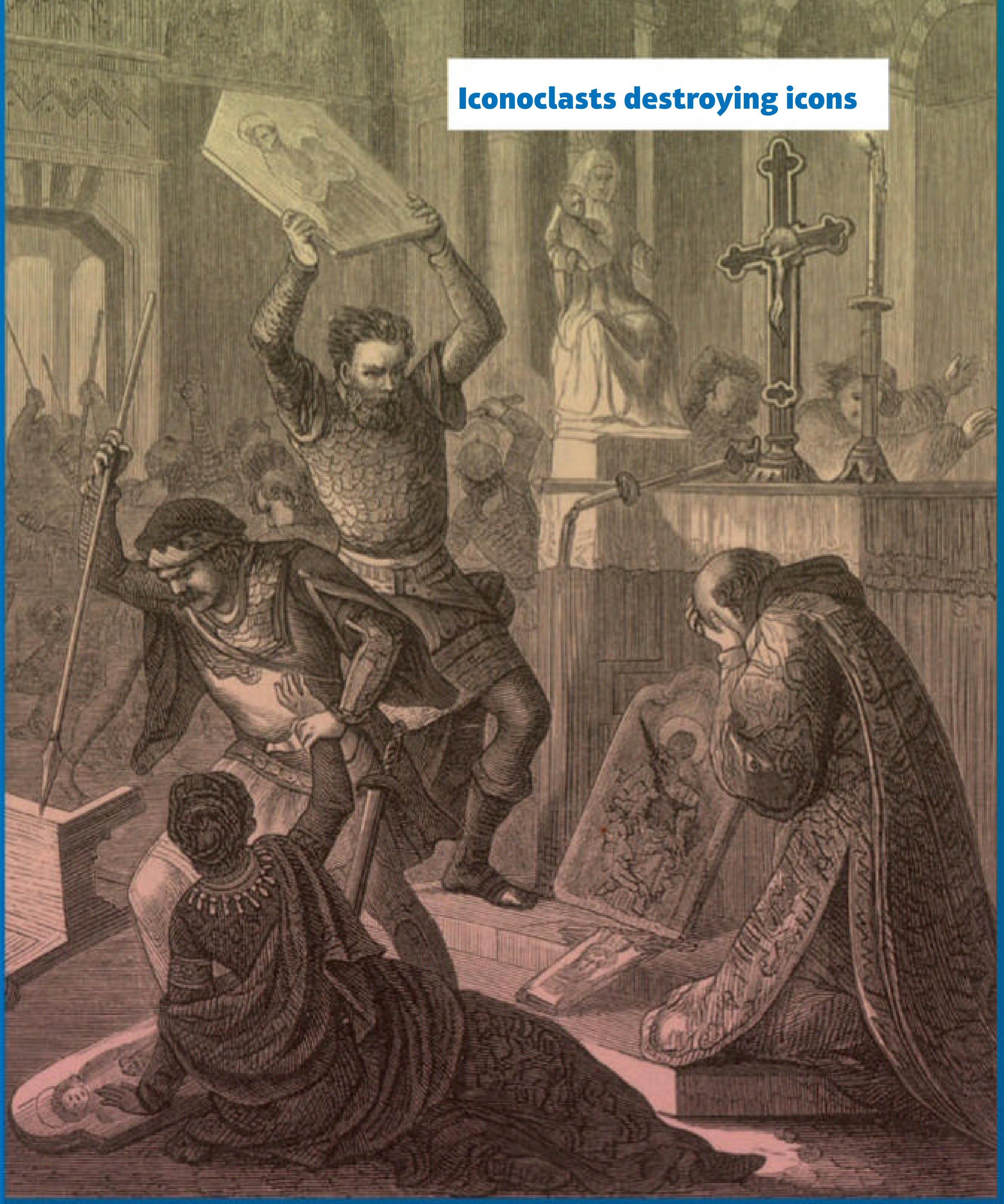
## DID YOU KNOW?

—that the word "byzantine" is also used as an adjective in English? It means "intricate, complex." This meaning derived from the fact that at Constantinople the royal court was considered complex and full of intrigue and that many of the members of the court were seen as devious.

# ICONOCLASTS VS. ICONOPHILES

by Sona Hoisington

Icons (*icon* is Greek for "image") are a key part of worship in the Eastern Church. Unlike in the Western Church, they were believed to perform miracles and act as protectors of homes and cities. Eastern Christians thought that an icon captured the essence of the person depicted — such as Jesus, his mother (Mary), and his followers (the Apostles). They believed that communication with that person could be established through the adoration of the icon. Icons are always portrayed frontally, with emphasis on the eyes.


Iconoclasts destroying icons

## No to Icons!

But there was a time in the eighth century — 730 to be exact — when the Byzantine emperor Leo III ordered priests to remove icons from churches and destroy them. Why the iconoclasts, as they were called, wanted icons destroyed is not entirely clear. Many of their writings were obliterated, when the iconophiles — those who venerated icons — finally triumphed. It may be that the iconoclasts felt that Byzantium was being punished for what they regarded as the worship of graven images. After all, the Muslim Arabs, their most formidable enemy, forbade art that included images of people in their mosques.

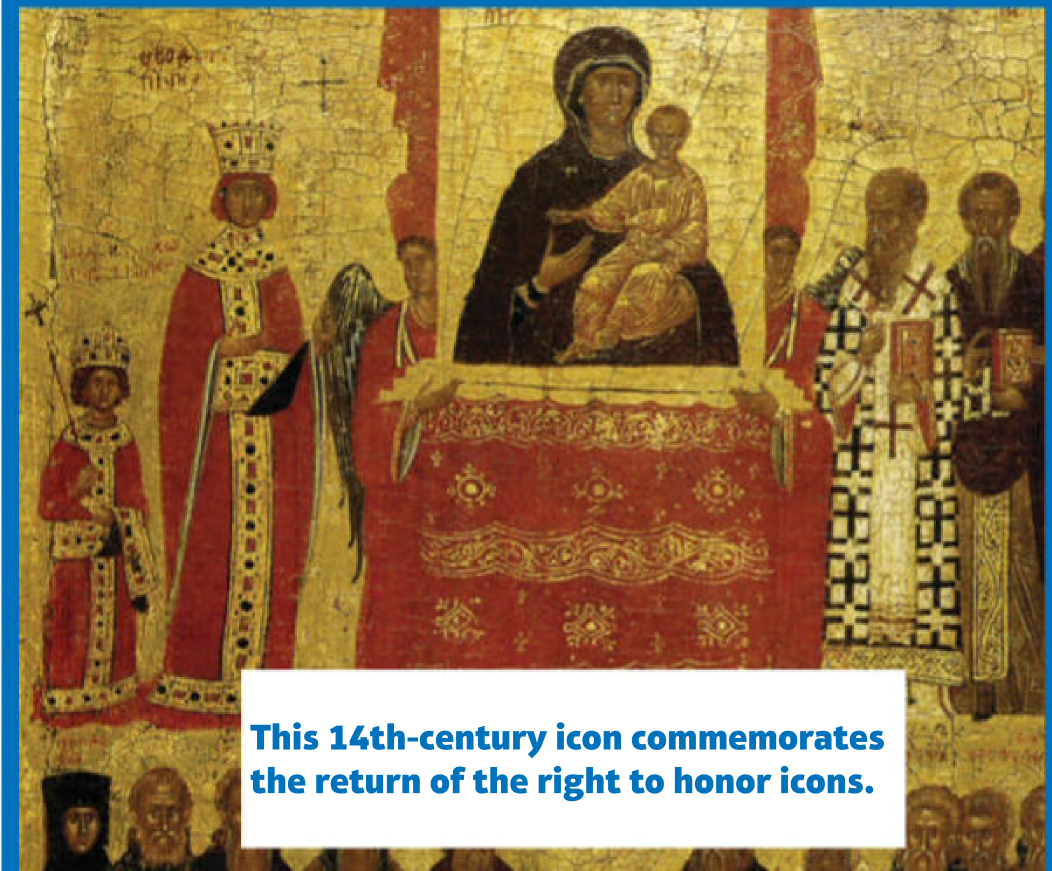
Leo's son, Constantine V, intensified the policies of his father. He called a council in 754 to consolidate iconoclast belief and practice.

The council denounced icons as "common" and "worthless." Icon venerators were persecuted, even put to death. Monks in monastic communities, who served as vehicles for the painting of religious images and encouraged their veneration, were especially targeted.

## Yes to Icons!

While there was male support for iconoclasm, particularly by the rulers and the military, women tended to be iconophiles. Two empresses are credited with restoring icons to their rightful place in Byzantine religious life. The first was Irene, who on the death of her husband (Leo IV) in 780, became regent for her young son. She called a council to denounce iconoclasm and restore the veneration of icons. From 797 to 802, she actually ruled as emperor, issuing laws and negotiating with the Muslim leader Harun al-Rashid and the Frankish king Charlemagne. She was deposed, and the male emperor who followed her restored iconoclasm. Once again, those who venerated icons were vigorously persecuted.

The iconoclasts held sway for the better part of 100 years. Finally, in 843, Theodora, on the death of her husband, the emperor Justinian, assumed power in the name of her young son, Michael III. She succeeded in reversing iconoclasm and was able to make an alliance with the court hierarchy. She wisely chose as **patriarch** Methodios, a staunch iconophile, who had been tortured and imprisoned for his beliefs. She commissioned him to write a new liturgy, one that celebrated the return to "Orthodoxy." For her deeds, Theodora is recognized as a saint in the Eastern Church. Appropriately, the restoration of icon veneration was commemorated in an icon. In the-14th-century copy (below) of an older icon, we see the empress with Michael III on the left and Patriarch Methodios and priests on the right. They are honoring an image of the Virgin Mary and her child, Jesus, in the center.



This 14th-century icon commemorates the return of the right to honor icons.

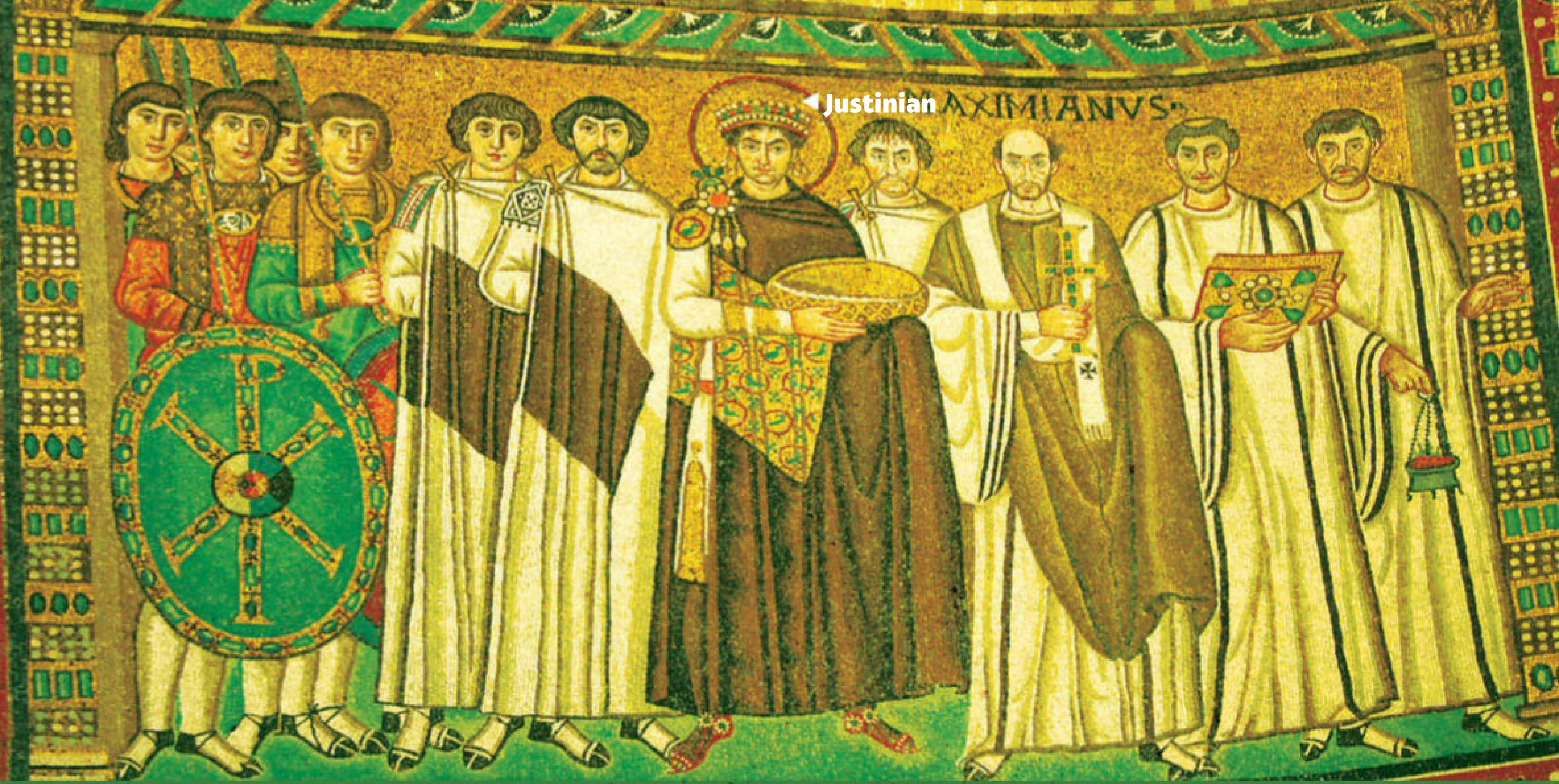
## Even Today

Icons were introduced by Byzantium to the **Slavs**, when they were Christianized. Icons continue to play an important role in their religious life to this day. In fact, people keep small icons in their homes. If you look at photos of the funerals held in 2018 in Kemerovo, Russia, where 60 people, many of them children, perished tragically in a mall fire, you will see icons.

*A retired university professor and a specialist in Russian culture,* **Sona Hoisington** *has lived in Russia and enjoys writing about historical subjects for young adults.*

**At the time of Leo III, the patriarch was the religious leader of the Eastern church, and the pope was the religious leader of the Western church.**

**A Slav is a member of any of the peoples of Eastern Europe who speak Slavic languages, including Russian, Ukrainian, and Belorussian to the east; Polish, Czech, and Slovak to the west; and Slovenian, Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, Macedonian, and Bulgarian to the south.**

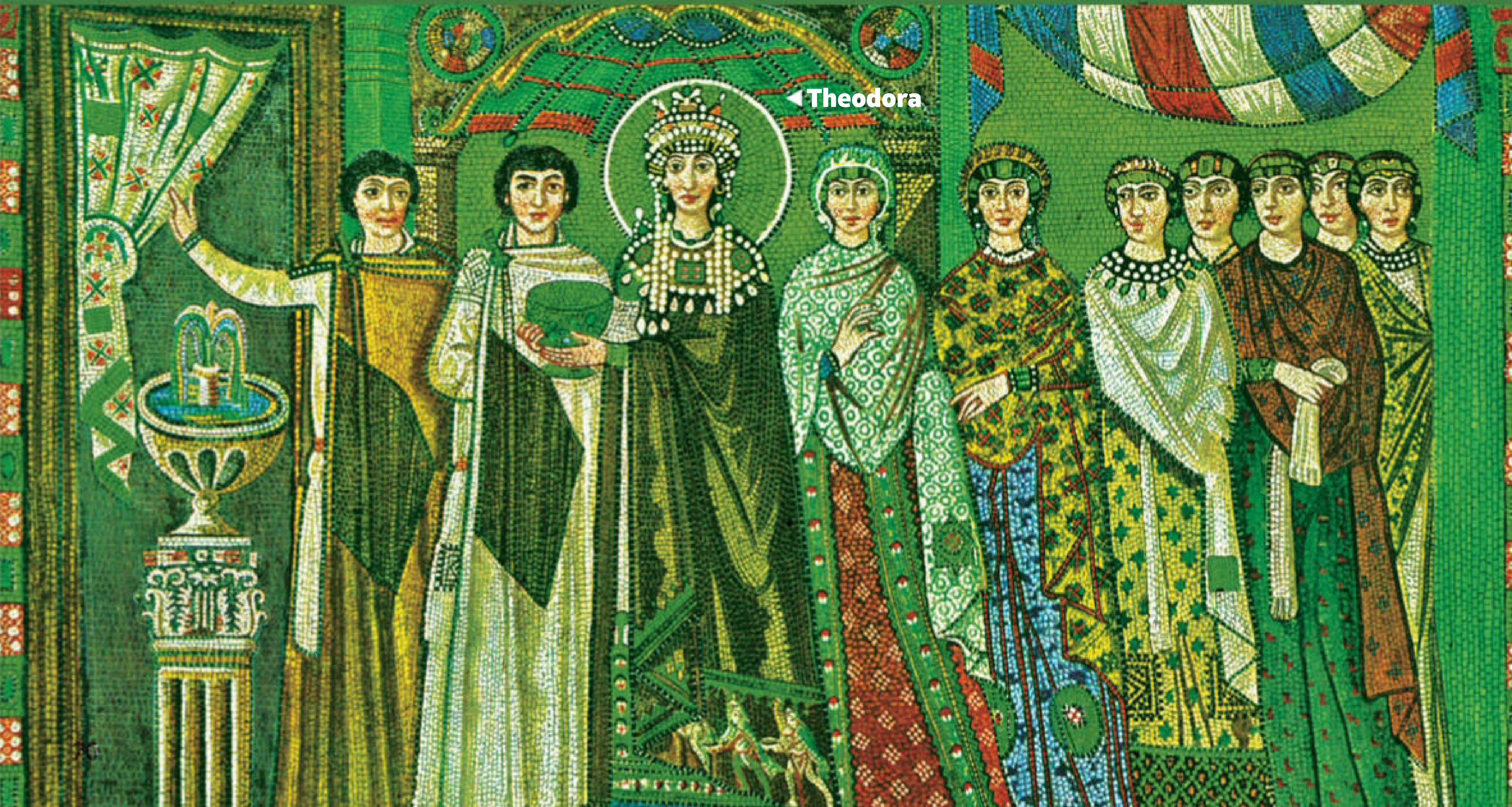


MAXIMIANVS

Justinian

# THE MIDDLE PERIOD

by Sona Hoisington



Theodora

The Byzantine Empire was at its peak under the emperor Justinian. It stretched from Ravenna on the Adriatic coast of Italy, through the Balkans, into North Africa, Egypt, Palestine, and Syria. Ravenna was its latest conquest. To capture it from the Goths, Justinian ordered the famed General Belisarius, who had already won many battles on the eastern front against Persia, to advance against the city.

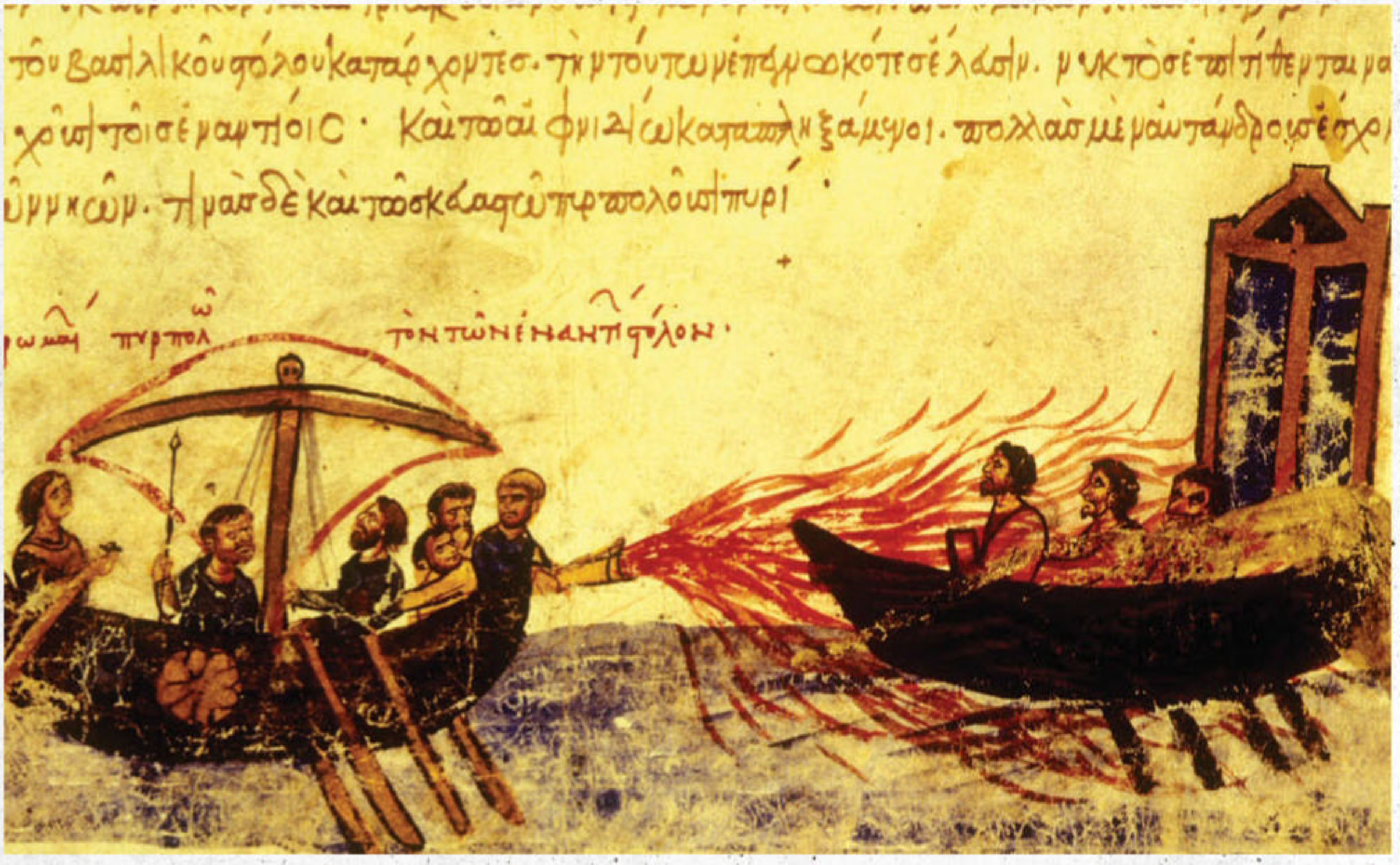
The Goths were defeated and their king captured in 540. To honor Justinian and his consort Theodora, two large mosaic panels were erected in Ravenna's Church of San Vitale. One showed the emperor in regal robes, his head surrounded with a golden halo to convey his semi-divine nature. Accompanying him were clergy, administrators, and soldiers (see image opposite top). The other showed the empress in imperial robes and a tall crown. With her were her ladies-in-waiting (see image opposite bottom). Mosaics were a favorite artistic medium of the Byzantines, an art form that traces it roots to ancient Rome.

## Invincible!

Constantinople, the largest city in Europe with a population at the time of 400,000, considered itself invincible. Triangular in shape, it was surrounded on two sides by water. On the third side, it was protected by a triple system of inner wall, outer wall, and moat. It had ample reserves of drinking water. This was thanks to numerous cisterns, the largest of which was built during Justinian's reign. It also had abundant granaries.

The empire's most celebrated weapon was Greek Fire, an explosive that destroyed wooden ships and siege towers. Just the threat of its use protected the city from attacks by sea (see illustration below). No one knows how Greek Fire was made, as the recipe was a highly guarded secret.

After Justinian's death, the empire began to decline. But it was not an abrupt descent. Rather, it was a matter of contracting, expanding, and then contracting again.



**Just imagine being in the boat on the right and feeling that Greek Fire being shot at you!**

## External Enemies

In 626, the Persians, aided by their neighboring allies, lay siege to Constantinople. According to legend, only the intervention of the Virgin Mary saved the city from destruction. In the decades that followed, Arabs who had embraced Islam began to seize Byzantium's lands in North Africa and the Middle East. Egypt, "the granary of the empire," was the next to fall to the Arabs. This loss made it more difficult for the Byzantines to feed themselves.

In 751, the Lombards, barbarian forces from northern Italy, took Ravenna. In the years that followed, the Slavs began to settle in the Balkans, taking control of almost the entire peninsula. It was around this time as well that the Seljuk Turks started moving into Asia Minor. Their great military advantage was having troops that could shoot arrows while on horseback. In 1071, they succeeded in defeating the Byzantines at the Battle of Manzikert, in what is now northeast Turkey. Their leader, Alp Arslan (Arabic for "heroic lion"), captured the Byzantine emperor. Soon after, he not only released him, but also allowed him to return to Constantinople. There, the emperor's rivals deposed him and had him exiled to an island.

## Internal Enemies

Within the empire, conflict erupted between those who venerated icons and those who wanted to destroy all icons (see also pages 18–19). The Empress Theodora finally resolved the controversy by ruling in favor of icon veneration. By that time, the empire's borders had been reduced to the lands that include present-day Greece and Turkey.

Other internal controversies also arose. On occasion, the military revolted and deposed an emperor. This is how Leo III, who initiated iconoclasm, came to power. Sometimes court intrigue led to the murder of an emperor or the banishment of an empress. Theodora's son, Michael III, for example, banished his mother when he came of age. He was murdered by his trusted advisor who became Basil I and established a new dynasty.

## The Rift Widens

It was during the reign of Leo III that the **pope** opposed the ban against icons in southern Italy, insisting that he alone had jurisdiction over the churches there. Recognizing that he might need assistance to carry out his rulings, the pope turned to the Frankish kings for protection. In 800, the pope crowned the Frankish king Charlemagne Emperor of the Romans. He did so rather than recognize the authority of the Byzantine empress Irene. It soon followed that the Western church began to dispute the practices of the Eastern Church.

In the Eastern Church, priests were permitted to marry, while they were not encouraged to marry in the Western Church. In addition, Latin was the language used for services in the Western church, while the vernacular, the language spoken by the people in a country, was permitted in the Eastern Church. No wonder that the Great **Schism** developed in 1054. That was the year the pope **excommunicated** the patriarch of the Eastern Church, and the **patriarch**, in turn, excommunicated the pope. It is also no wonder that the Fourth **Crusade** sacked Constantinople in 1204.

## Turning Enemies into Allies

But the Byzantines had notable successes as well during this middle period. They succeeded in

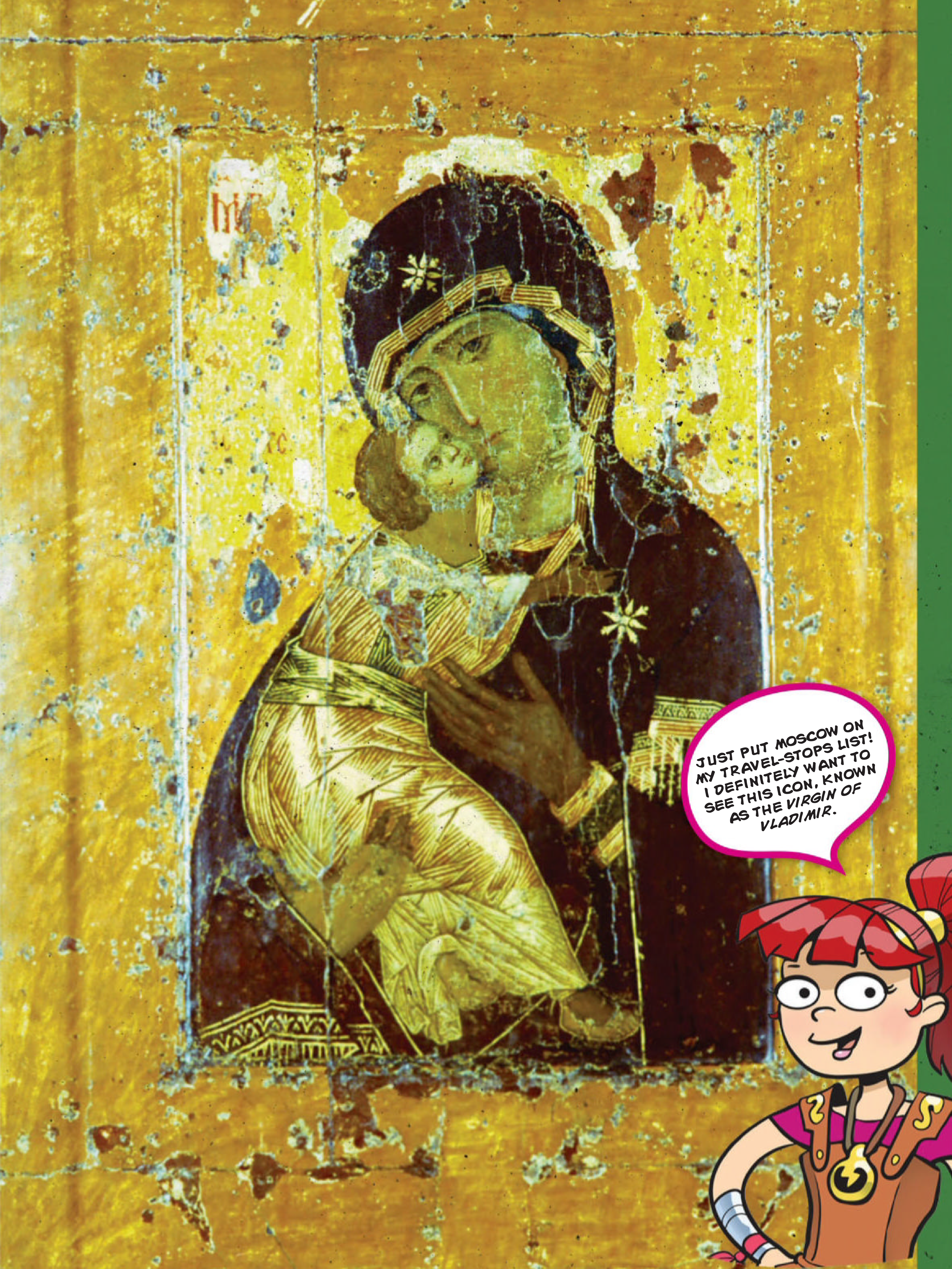
**At the time of Leo III, the pope was the religious leader of the Western church.**

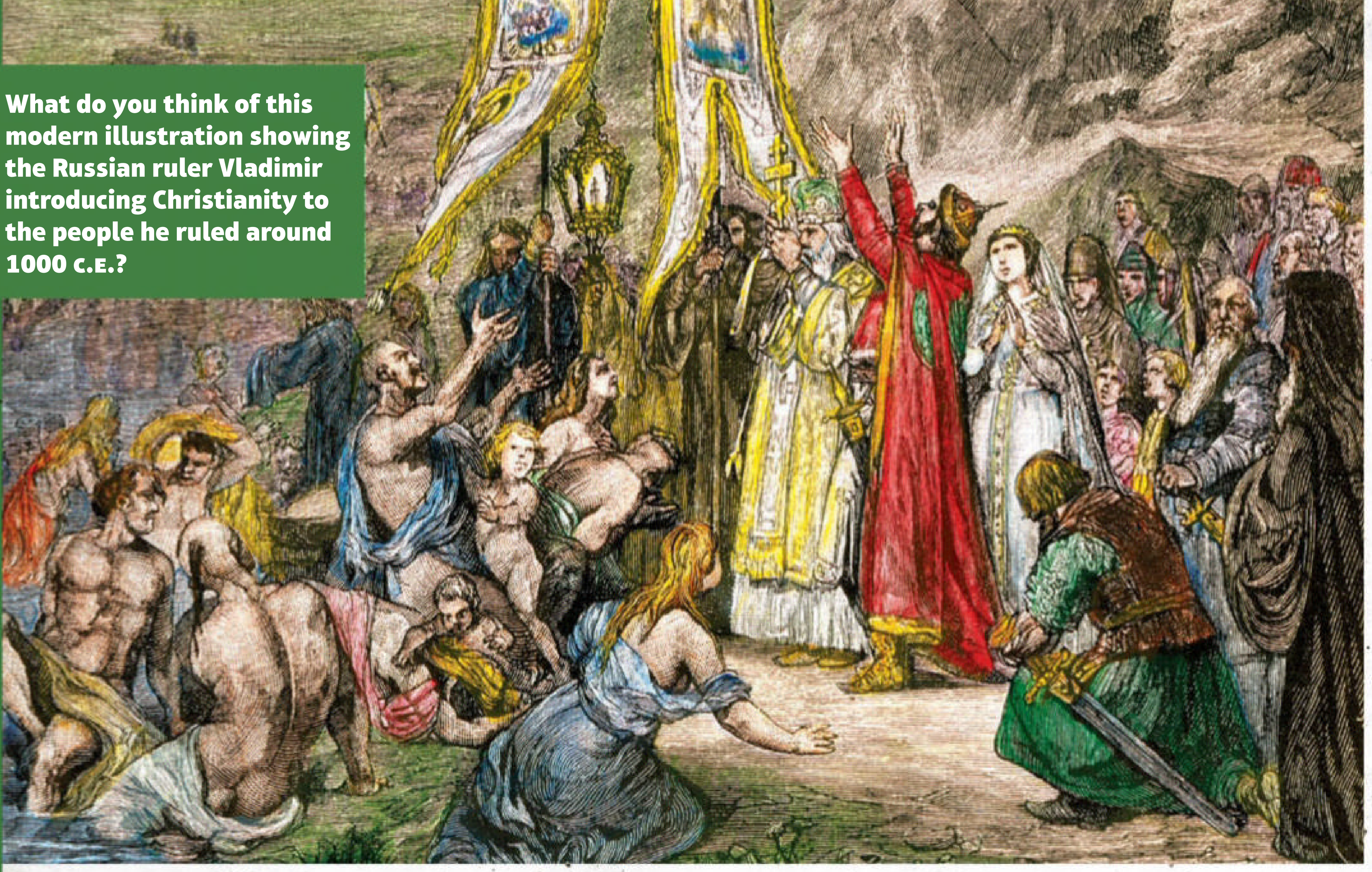
**The patriarch was the religious leader of the Eastern church.**

**A schism is the formal separation of a Church into two Churches.**

**Excommunicate means to officially exclude a person or group from participation in the sacraments and services of a religious community.**

**Crusade, here, refers to several military expeditions undertaken by Christian powers in the West in the 11th, 12th, and 13th centuries to win the Holy Land from the Muslims.**


JUST PUT MOSCOW ON MY TRAVEL-STOPS LIST! I DEFINITELY WANT TO SEE THIS ICON, KNOWN AS THE *VIRGIN OF VLADIMIR*.



**What do you think of this modern illustration showing the Russian ruler Vladimir introducing Christianity to the people he ruled around 1000 C.E.?**

turning the Slavs, pagan tribes who had frequently attacked them, into allies. How were they able to do this? They did so by converting them to Eastern Christianity. Moreover, at the encouragement of Patriarch Photios, revered as a great church leader and scholar, two brothers, Cyril and Methodios, developed a written alphabet for the Slavs. The Slavs were then permitted to use their own language in the liturgy. Religious texts were translated into the Slavic language. Artisans were sent to design and build churches, and priests were sent to conduct worship. Religious objects such as icons were also sent. The *Virgin of Vladimir*, brought to Kiev from Constantinople in the 12th century, is still highly venerated in Russia today (see photo of icon on page 23).

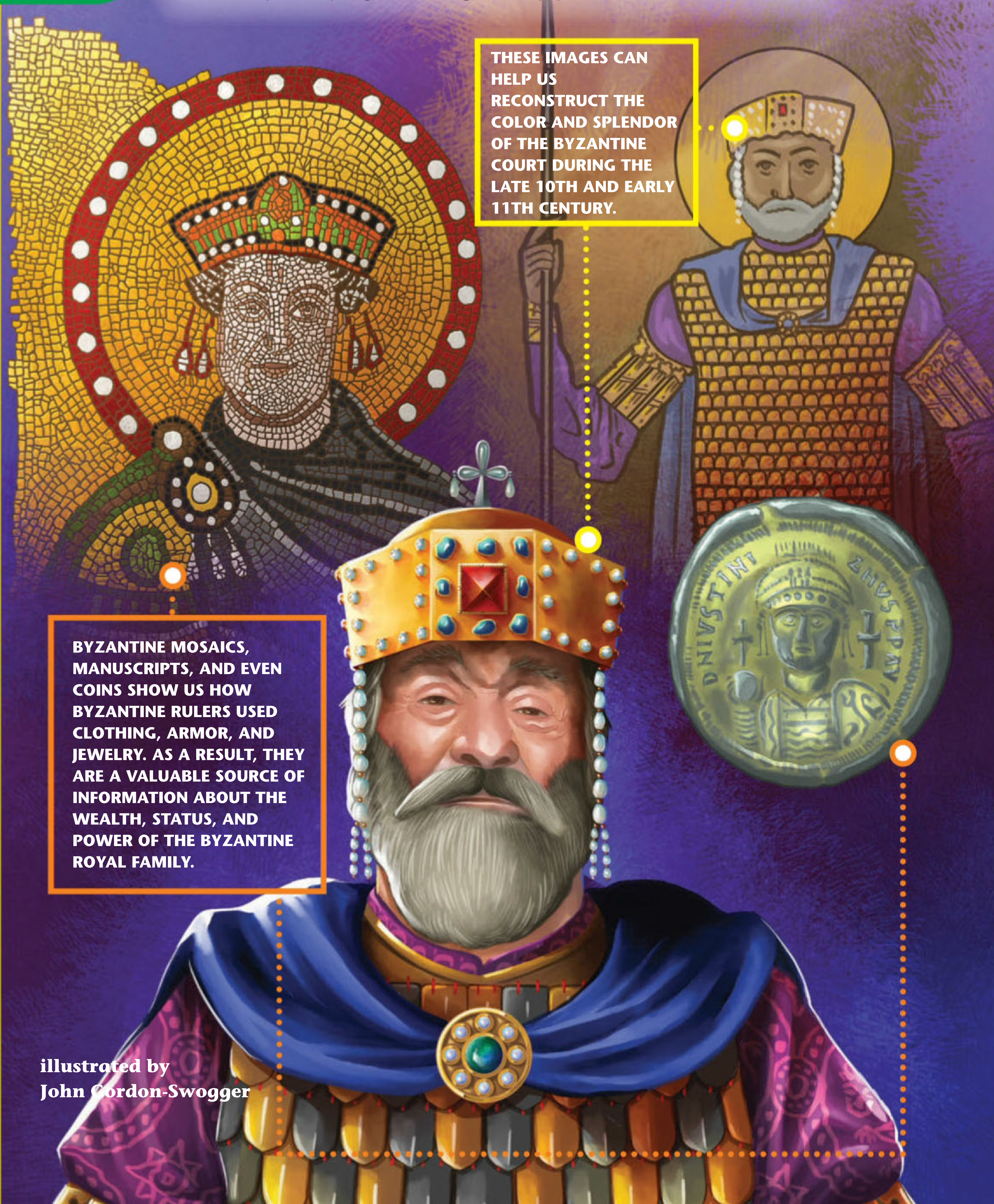
The Bulgarians were the first Slavs to be Christianized. The year was 864. Just a century later, in 988, the powerful Eastern Slavic prince Vladimir, whose kingdom was centered in Kiev (capital of present-day Ukraine), established Byzantine Christianity as the state religion of the lands he ruled (see illustration above). Wishing to share in the wealth, prestige, and might of Byzantium, he married the sister of the Byzantine emperor and adopted the customs of the Byzantine court. He also ordered that churches and monasteries be built with the help of Byzantine craftsmen. He even minted gold coins in the Byzantine manner, with his likeness on one side and Christ's on the other. His son, Prince Yaroslav the Wise, commissioned a cathedral modeled on the Hagia Sophia (see page 41) in Constantinople. Built by Byzantine masters, its beautiful mosaics and frescos have been preserved. You can see them today if you visit Kiev.

## No Power Is Forever

Thus, the cultural and religious influence of the Byzantine Empire grew. Between the 9th and 11th centuries, the state expanded and again consolidated its position as a world power. Bulgaria, which controlled much of the Balkans, was incorporated into its holdings. By the end of the middle period, however, when the crusaders captured Constantinople, much of the empire's power and authority had been lost.

# Up Close with Mosaics

Archaeologists can learn a lot about how people in the past looked by studying the images they produced of themselves.



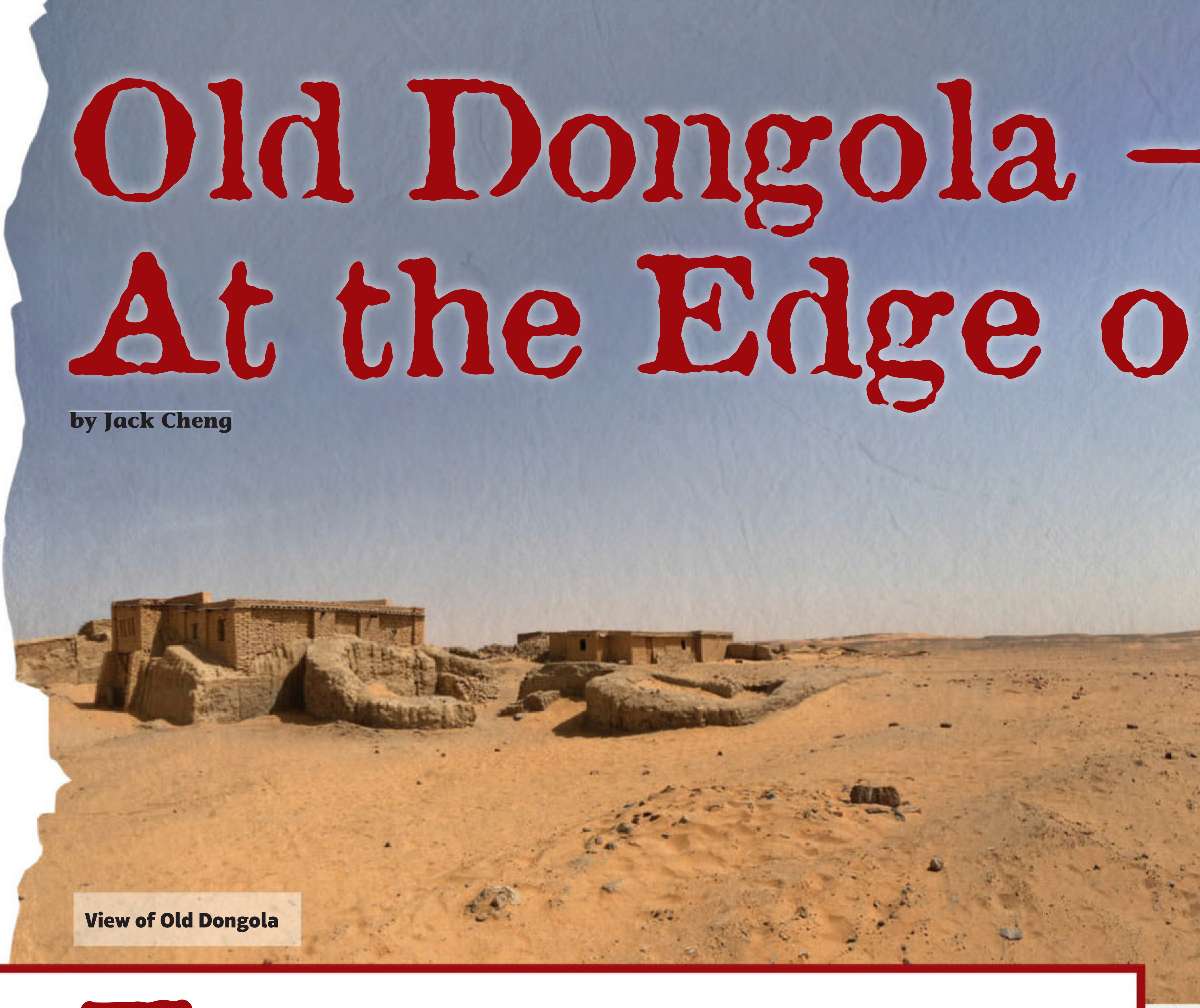
THESE IMAGES CAN HELP US RECONSTRUCT THE COLOR AND SPLENDOR OF THE BYZANTINE COURT DURING THE LATE 10TH AND EARLY 11TH CENTURY.

BYZANTINE MOSAICS, MANUSCRIPTS, AND EVEN COINS SHOW US HOW BYZANTINE RULERS USED CLOTHING, ARMOR, AND JEWELRY. AS A RESULT, THEY ARE A VALUABLE SOURCE OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE WEALTH, STATUS, AND POWER OF THE BYZANTINE ROYAL FAMILY.

illustrated by
John Gordon-Swogger

# Old Dongola – At the Edge o

by Jack Cheng

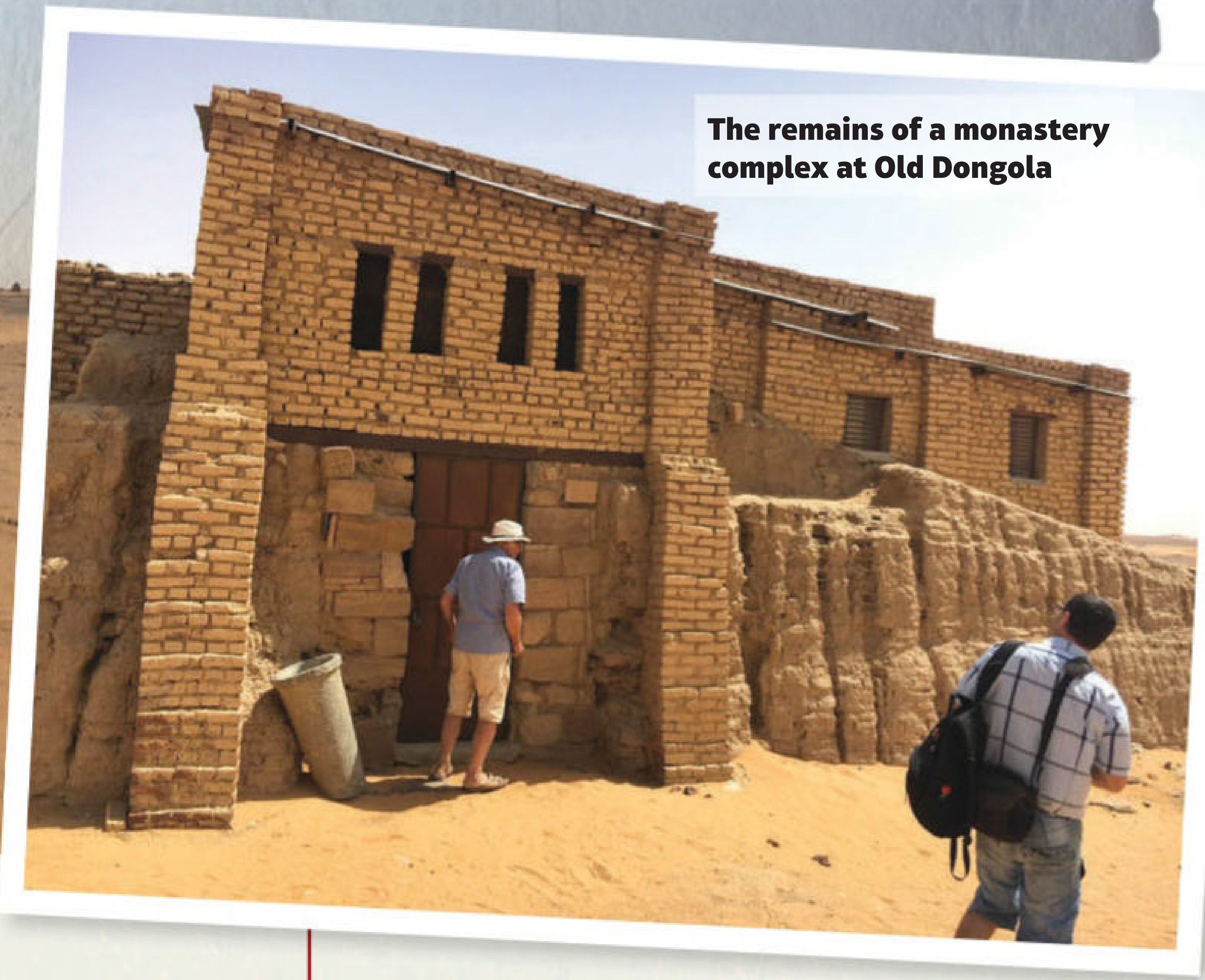


View of Old Dongola

Traveling over land, the distance from Constantinople to the town of Dongola, in North Africa's Sahara Desert, is a little more than 3,000 miles. "A little more than 3,000 miles" is also about the distance from Boston, Massachusetts, to San Francisco, California.

At 3,000 miles from the capital, Dongola was still part of the Byzantine Empire. The town was definitely on the frontier, as it lay south down the Nile in the modern nation of Sudan. To be sure, the long geographic reach of Byzantium is evidence of the empire's powerful cultural influence. However, the question remains, "How did Byzantine culture differ as it was adapted in regions far from the heart of the empire?"

# f the Empire



**The remains of a monastery complex at Old Dongola**

## An Exception in Africa

When Queen Cleopatra died in 30 B.C.E., her nation of Egypt became a province of the Roman Empire. For centuries after, Egyptians continued to worship local gods and goddesses. Under Roman rule, worship of deities such as Osiris and Horus continued alongside early Christianity. Christian missionaries in the first century C.E. had established the Coptic Church, spreading the gospel in the local language, Coptic.

With the establishment of Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire, pagan — that is, non-Christian — temples were ordered closed. The one exception was the Temple of Isis. This suggests that the rules were slightly different for the North Africans living far from the center of the Empire.

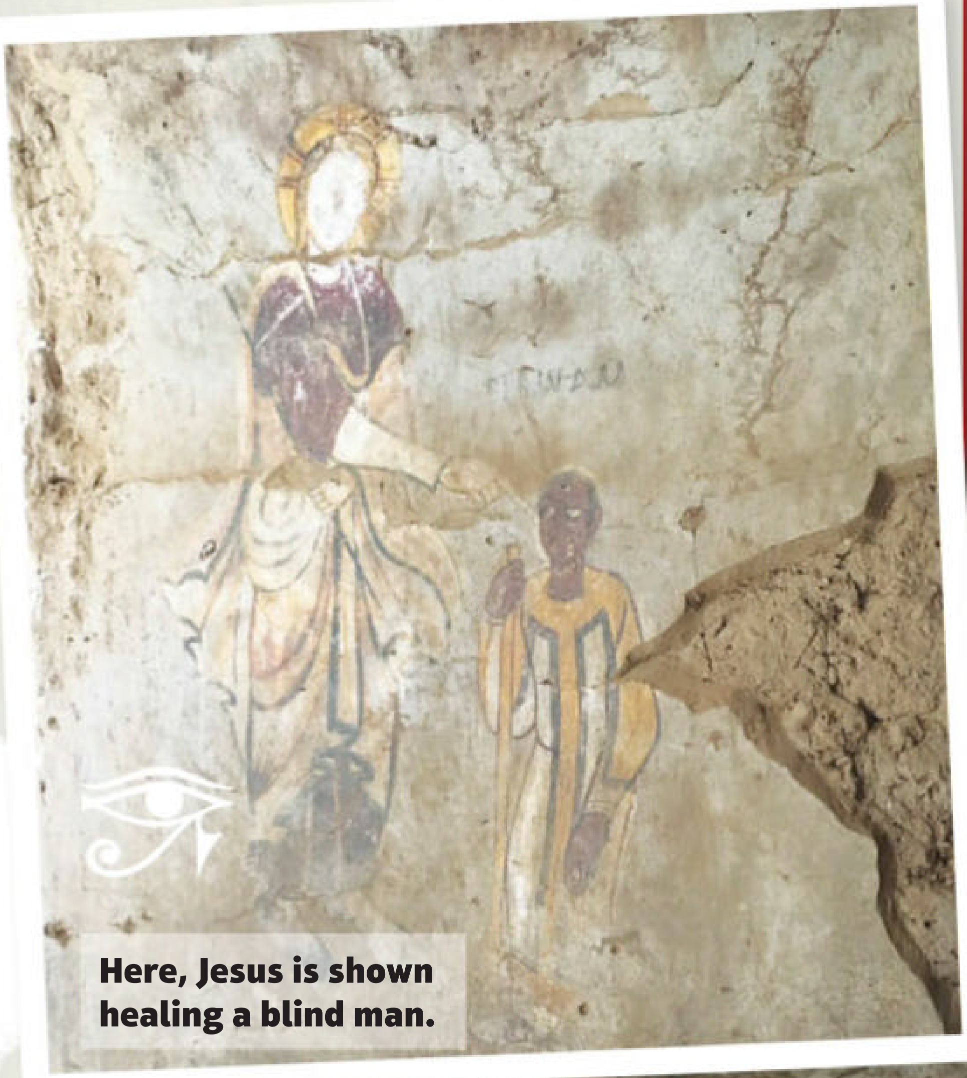
## A Peace Treaty

Along the Nile, just south of Egypt, lay the region known as Nubia. Dongola was the capital of Makuria, one of three Nubian kingdoms.

Christian missionaries, possibly from Constantinople, converted the Makurians to

Christianity in the sixth century C.E. As the Makurians expanded north, they came into direct contact with Byzantine Egypt. Exchanges of goods between the two countries is evident in the regional pottery types found in the archaeological record. Contacts with church officials in Alexandria, Egypt, led to the establishment of **dioceses** in Makuria.

In the mid-seventh century, a Muslim army attacked Makuria, but the Nubians held them back. After a prolonged siege of Dongola, the Islamic forces retreated. The two sides signed a peace treaty known as the *baqt* — a treaty that prevented war for 520 years.



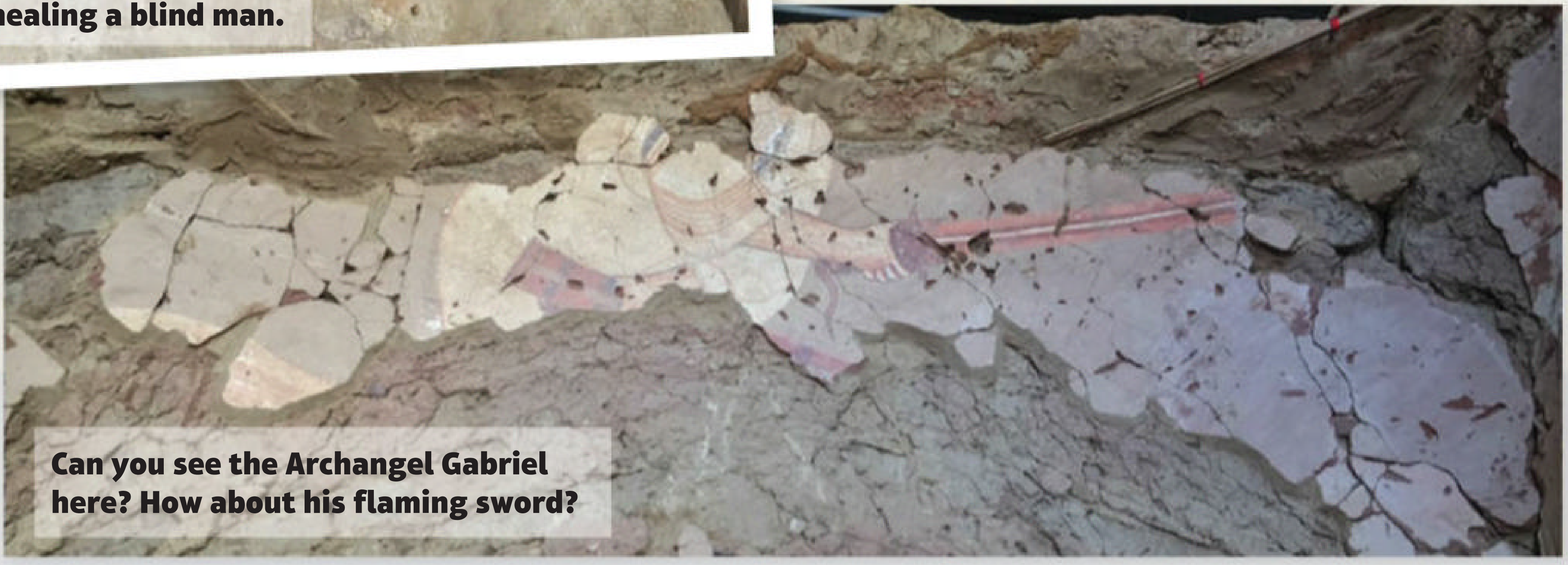
**Here, Jesus is shown healing a blind man.**

## Finds tell a Story

The reason we know of the Byzantine Empire's spread to Dongola is from the work of Polish archaeological teams excavating in the area since 1964. Their work sheds light onto what life was like at the far reaches of the Byzantine Empire.

Currently known as "Old Dongola," to distinguish the ancient site from a modern town with the same name, this area in the eastern Sahara Desert seems an unlikely location for a settlement. However, as any visitor will attest, the proximity of the Nile River and the green crops growing on an island in the river make Dongola appear a paradise when compared to its desolate surroundings.

The most prominent building on site is Throne Hall. This tower juts approximately 40 feet into the air. A number of other buildings have been excavated between Throne Hall and the riverbank, including palaces and churches. The archaeologists have also identified certain buildings as workshops for making pottery and smelting iron.



**Can you see the Archangel Gabriel here? How about his flaming sword?**

**A diocese is an area that is controlled by a bishop, a senior member of the clergy of the Christian Church.**

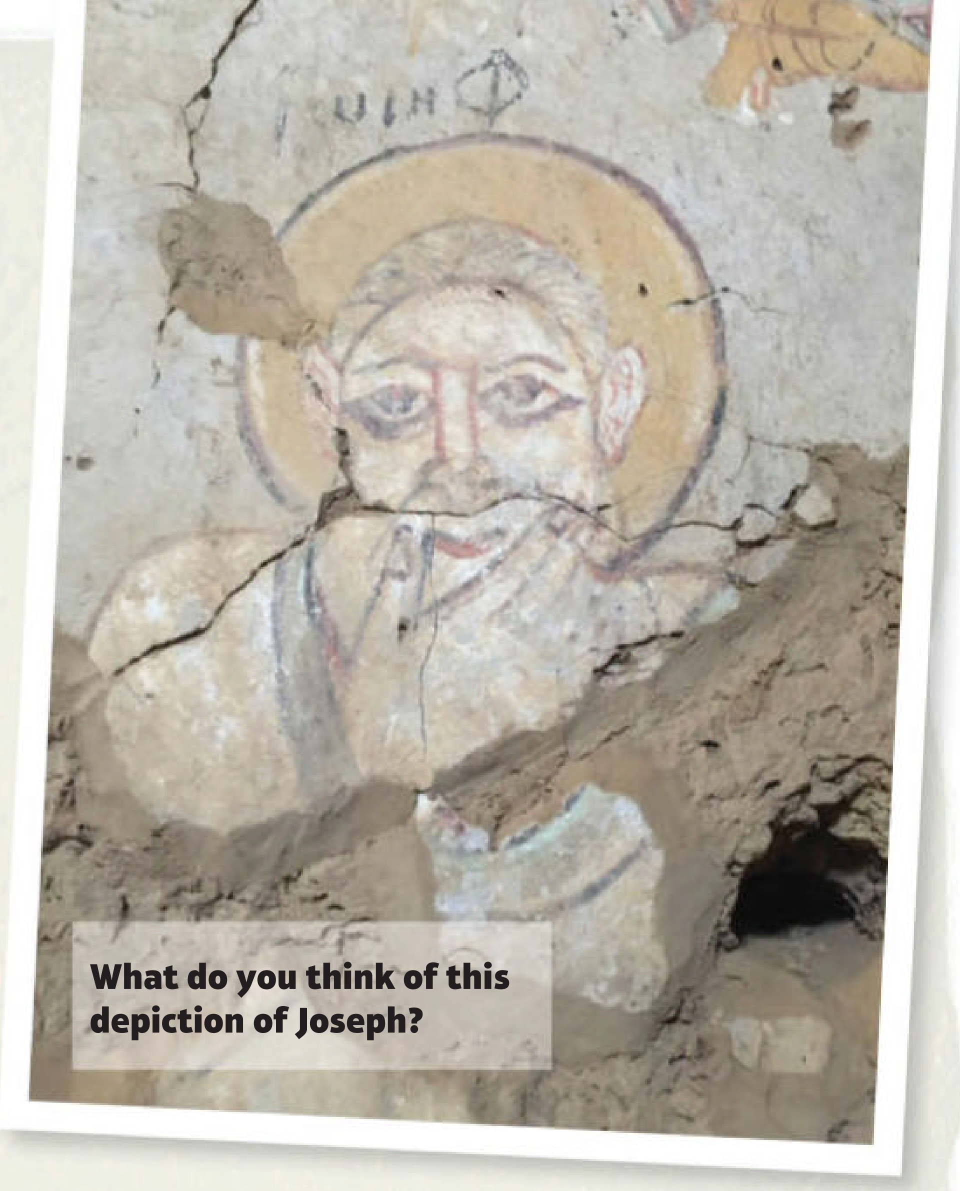
## A Revealing Mural

To the northeast of Throne Hall stands the Monastery of St. Anthony. It is believed to have been founded by the first bishops of Dongola. The Monastery consists of a church and associated buildings, including housing for monks and structures to serve pilgrims. The complex was enlarged and rebuilt in the 11th century.

Within this complex are a number of painted murals. While some images are similar to those in the Byzantine capital, others are quite distinct. For example, the story of how **Jesus** healed a blind man is familiar to those who have read the Bible. However, in Dongola, the man Jesus heals is shown as an African (see inset opposite). It is easy to imagine that this miraculous act would have been more meaningful to local inhabitants if they saw Jesus healing someone who looked like themselves.

## Unusual or Common?

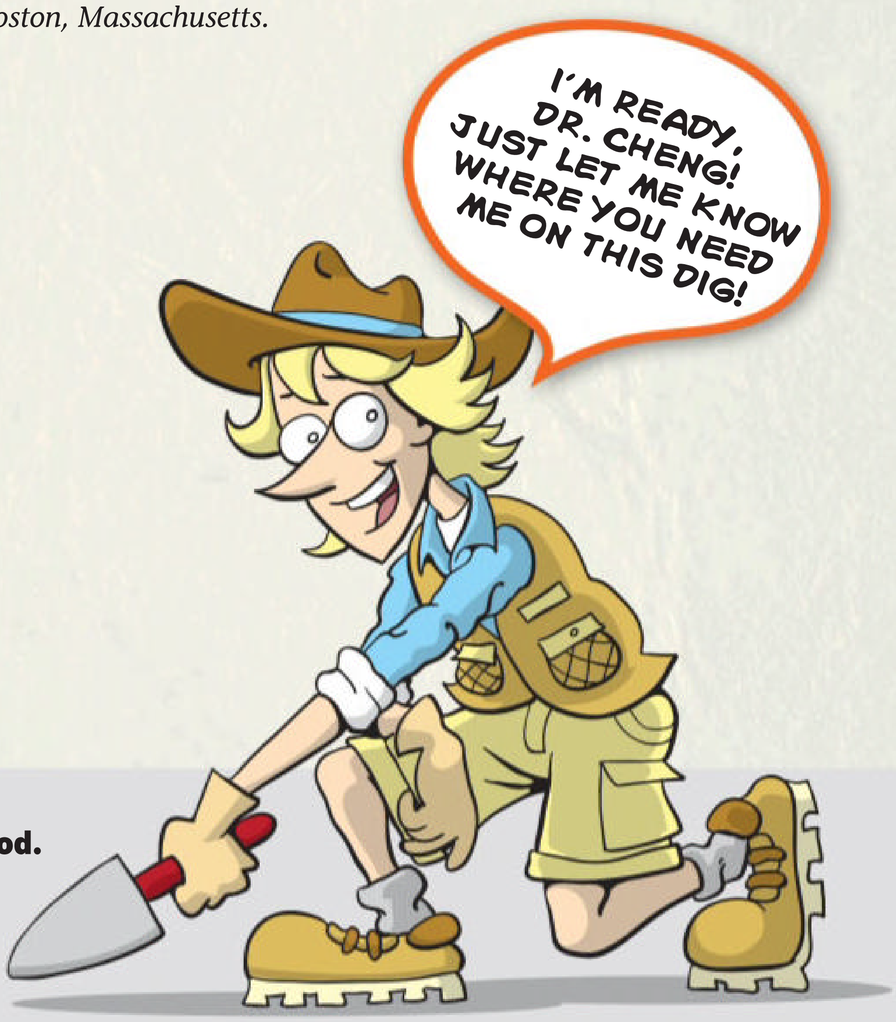
In a painting above a doorway (see photo opposite bottom), the **Archangel Gabriel** wields a flaming sword that, for a teenaged American visitor, brought to mind a pop culture weapon: "It looks like a Sith light saber [from Star Wars]." A painting of **Joseph** next to a **Nativity scene** shows a man who looks more perplexed than blessed at the birth of Jesus. The depiction is very unusual. How might we interpret this? Perhaps Joseph's expression (see above) reflects a skepticism found in the outer reaches of Christianity at this time. Or perhaps, as the Polish excavators have suggested, this was not unusual iconography for the time. Rather, it stands out as other examples from the center of Byzantium were destroyed during the period of iconoclasm.



**What do you think of this depiction of Joseph?**

The capital of an empire often holds its greatest treasures. However, the frontier reaches of empires also play a major role in helping historians determine which symbols and images are variable and which are key in helping to define the culture.

**Jack Cheng**, *Ph.D., is an archaeologist and writer who lives near Boston, Massachusetts.*


I'M READY, DR. CHENG! JUST LET ME KNOW WHERE YOU NEED ME ON THIS DIG!

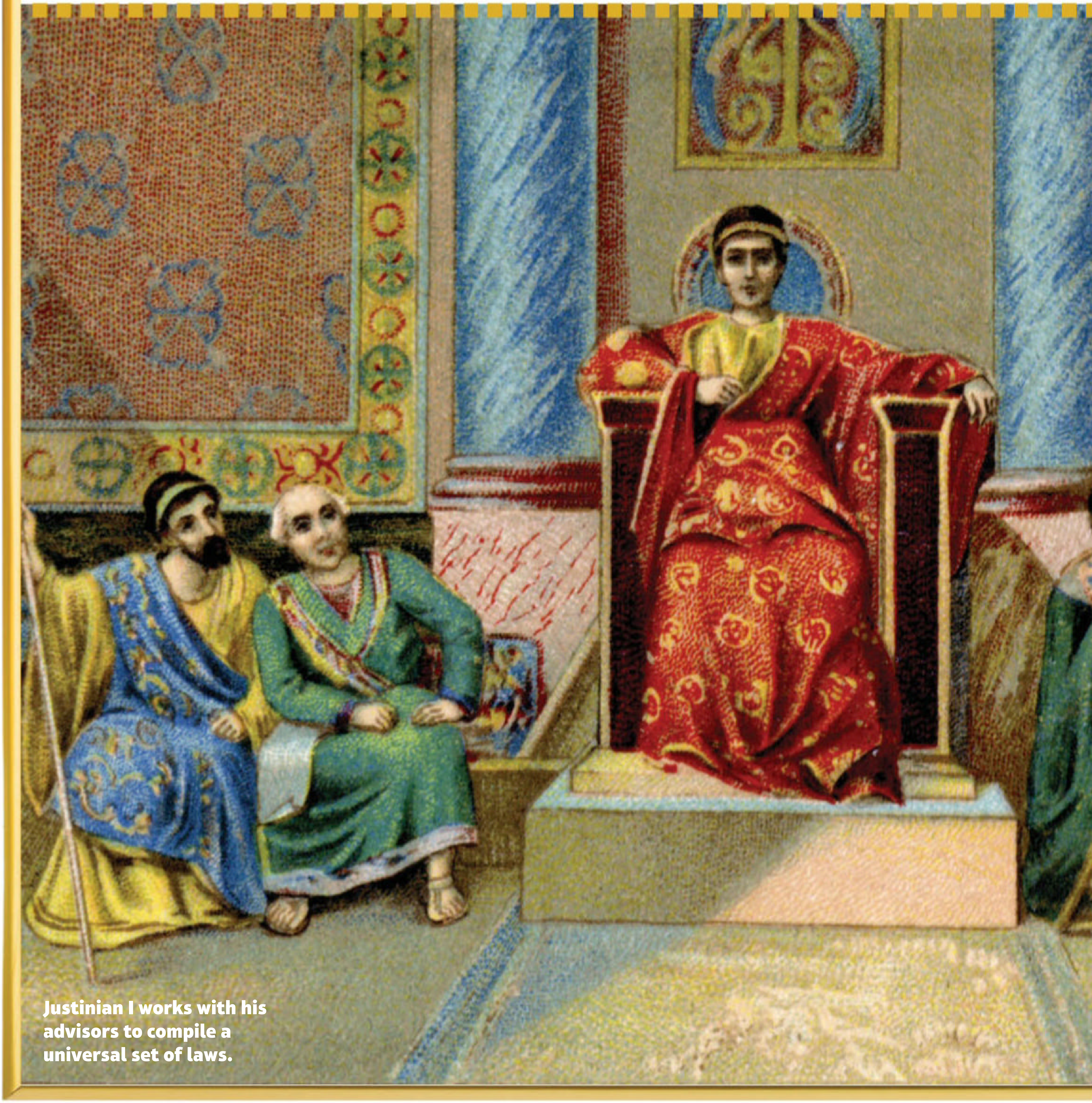
**In the Christian religion, Jesus is the central figure as the son of God.**

**The Archangel Gabriel is God's messenger.**

**Joseph is the husband of Mary, mother of Jesus.**

**Nativity scene refers to an artistic representation of the birth of Jesus Christ. Such scenes are often displayed at Christmas.**

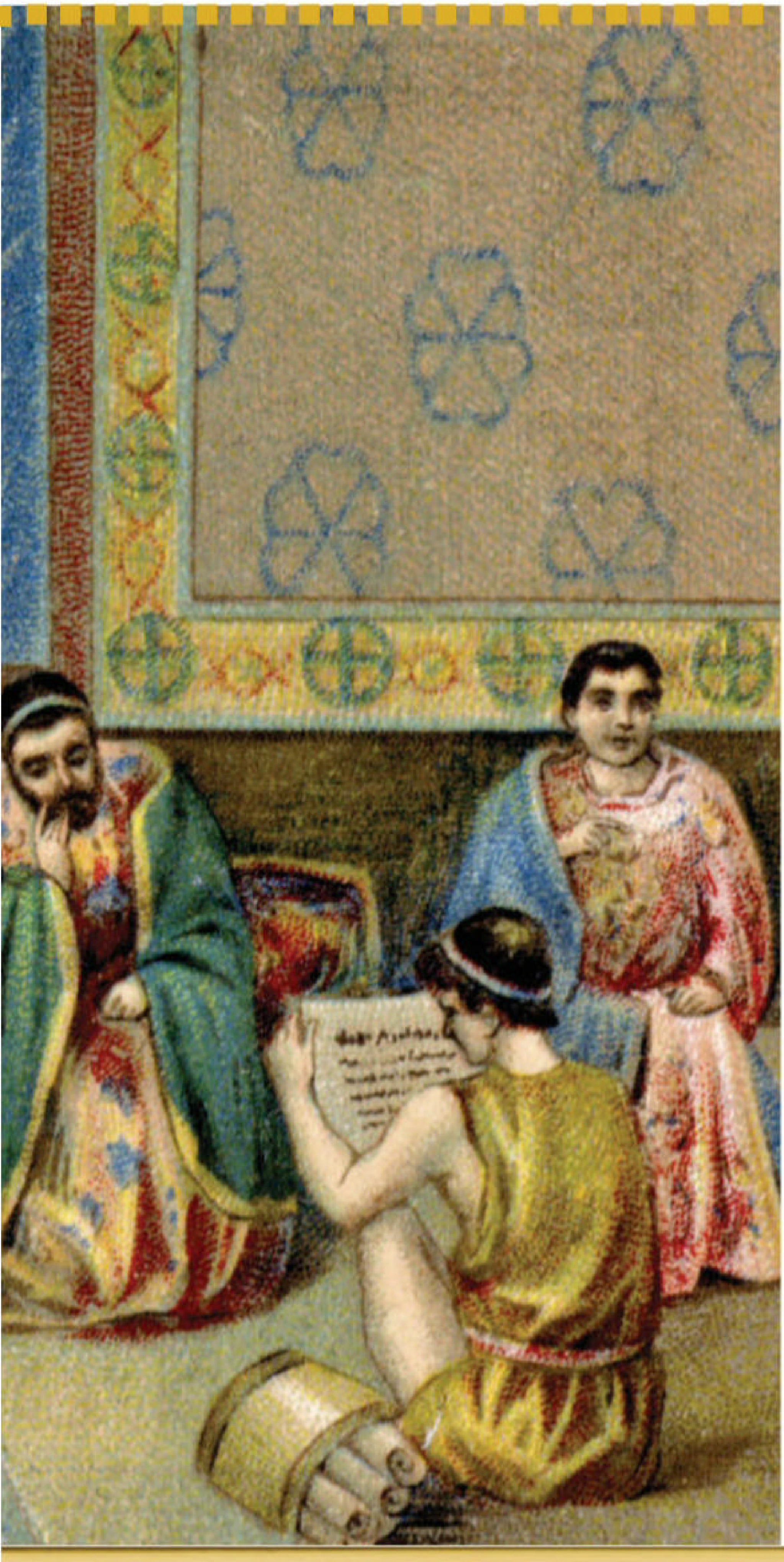
# THE INFLUENCE OF BYZANTINE



Justinian I works with his advisors to compile a universal set of laws.

**by Emily Abbink**

# LAW



Byzantine laws were a continuation of Roman laws, along with a Christian influence introduced by the emperor Justinian. The ancient Romans were a practical people. They knew that they needed to maintain order within a vast territory and among a large and diverse citizenry. Roman laws were rooted in that fact. The Romans recognized that there needed to be a certain measure of justice as well as a respect for individual rights among peoples of very different cultures and religions.

## A TIME OF PEACE

The Roman Empire was known for the *Pax Romana* ("Roman Peace"). This 200-year period of empire-wide peace was based on religious tolerance and social stability. Such awareness allowed Rome's leaders to focus on economic prosperity and on building good infrastructure, including roads, tunnels, and bridges.

The Romans recognized the need for a variety of laws and distinguished between criminal, civil, and sacred law codes. Through the centuries, Byzantine rulers used the Roman model to formally organize, clarify, evaluate, and record laws that were to be enforced throughout the empire. Such a standardized system of laws would serve to replace reliance on a loose patchwork of oral history, "cultural" laws, and the whims of local magistrates or customs.

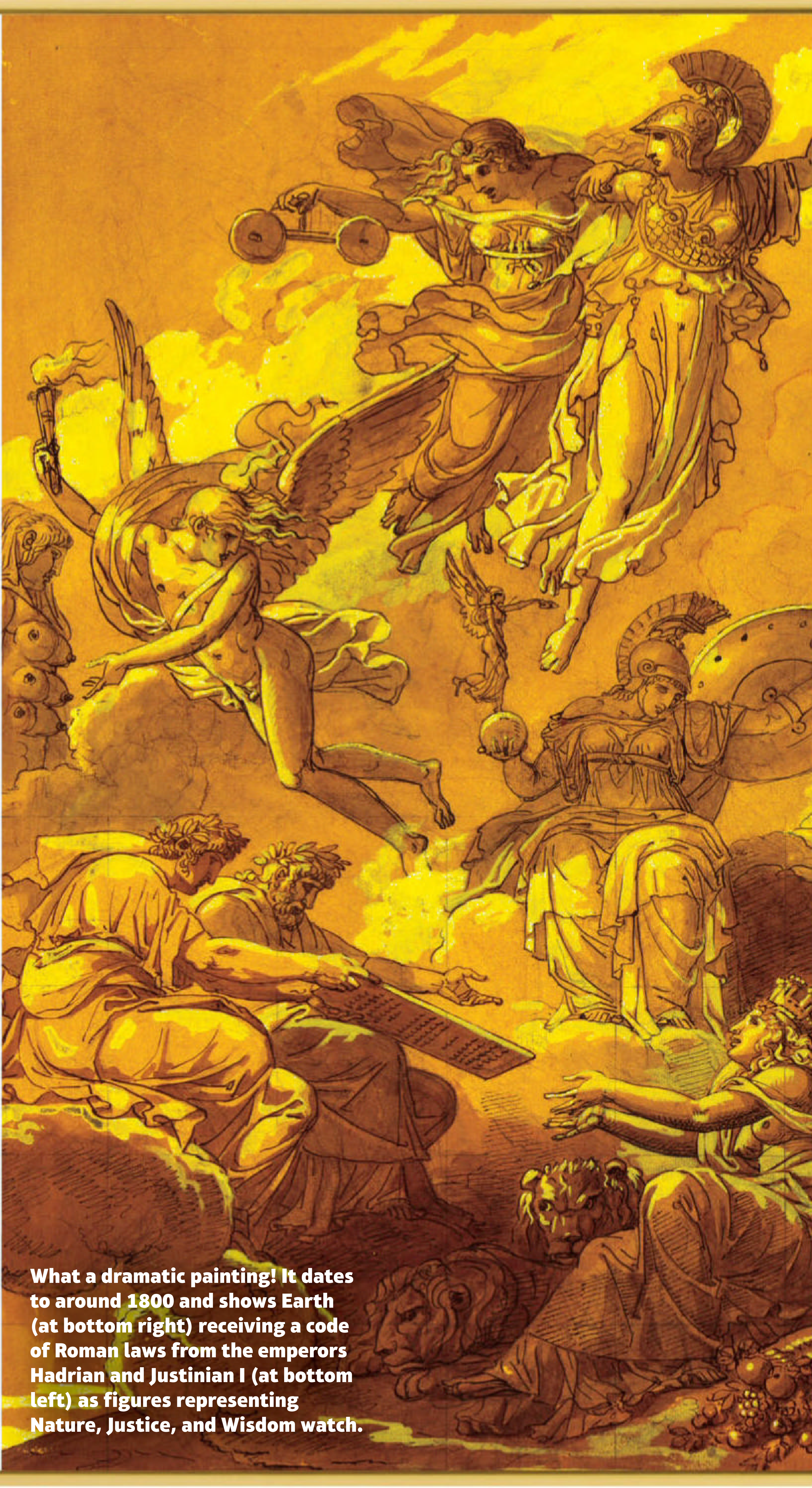
## THE NEED FOR MORE

As Byzantine trade grew, there was an increased need for regulations. The Byzantines recognized that they needed to pass laws that supported equality, not just between citizens or communities, but with regard to foreign trade relations as well. Because Constantinople, like Rome, was such a large city, the development of civil law that focused on domestic relations between community members — property rights, inheritance, and family law, for example — became a key factor in maintaining domestic peace and stability.

Three main Byzantine legal efforts helped shape the imperial law codes. These would ultimately influence western European legal thinking and form the bedrock of many modern governments, especially in the area of modern-day human rights.

## JUSTINIAN'S CONTRIBUTION

The first was the *Corpus Juris Civilis* or Justinian Code. It was Emperor Justinian's project to be the first to



**What a dramatic painting! It dates to around 1800 and shows Earth (at bottom right) receiving a code of Roman laws from the emperors Hadrian and Justinian I (at bottom left) as figures representing Nature, Justice, and Wisdom watch.**

gather, compile, clarify, and formalize ancient Roman laws into a usable collection (see illustration pages 30–31). He set out to create a universal set of laws that the entire Byzantine Empire could follow. These laws would have precedence over local laws, thereby preventing contradictions in court rulings. Laws in many different languages were translated into Latin for universal accessibility. They were then organized into categories according to people, things, or activities. Justinian also added a strong Christian influence to the development of Byzantine laws. For example, he forbade human sacrifice and, with help from his wife, Theodora, issued some of the earliest laws aimed at protecting women.

## Leo's Contribution

In 740 C.E., Emperor Leo III issued the second major Byzantine legal effort. This code, known as *Ecloga*, was written in Greek, not Latin, so that more citizens could understand. It updated and furthered many of Justinian's reforms. The *Ecloga* clarified and modified laws for rural areas and farms, touching on taxation, the status of workers, family rights, inheritance, and maritime and criminal law. Leo also introduced standardized penalties for crimes and outlawed the death penalty for many lesser crimes, such as theft.

## Basil's Contribution

In 879 C.E., Emperor Basil started to adapt and expand the earlier law collections of Justinian and Leo III. His son, Leo VI, also known as Leo the Wise, finished his father's task during his own reign with the 60-volume *Basilika*. This work abolished many of the obsolete legal practices the Byzantine Empire had inherited from the Roman Empire. Leo VI also added new rules that regulated trade and trade organizations and standardized the duties of Byzantine court officials. These laws improved the economy and the standard of living throughout the empire.

## A Look to the People

As the centuries passed, Byzantine rulers amended laws to keep up with the changing economy and times. This was a new way of regarding law — seeing the system as one that served the people and not something that had to be obeyed out of loyalty to old times. This flexible approach to making laws influenced European lawmakers long after the Byzantine Empire had fallen. For example, the Napoleonic Code of 1804, one of the single largest legal reforms of the modern age, grew out of Byzantine legal legacy. The Code abolished **feudalism** and allowed everyone, not just the aristocracy, the right, if not the ability, to own property. The Napoleonic Code was an important step in replacing outdated systems of Western European law that were based largely on feudal favoritism and inherited aristocratic privilege.

The laws and thinking processes that emerged during the Byzantine period gradually helped to create a more equal society. They also served to improve relations between upper and lower classes, as well as between men and women. These reforms helped to set the stage for the development of western Europe's legal thinking and, later, that of the United States.

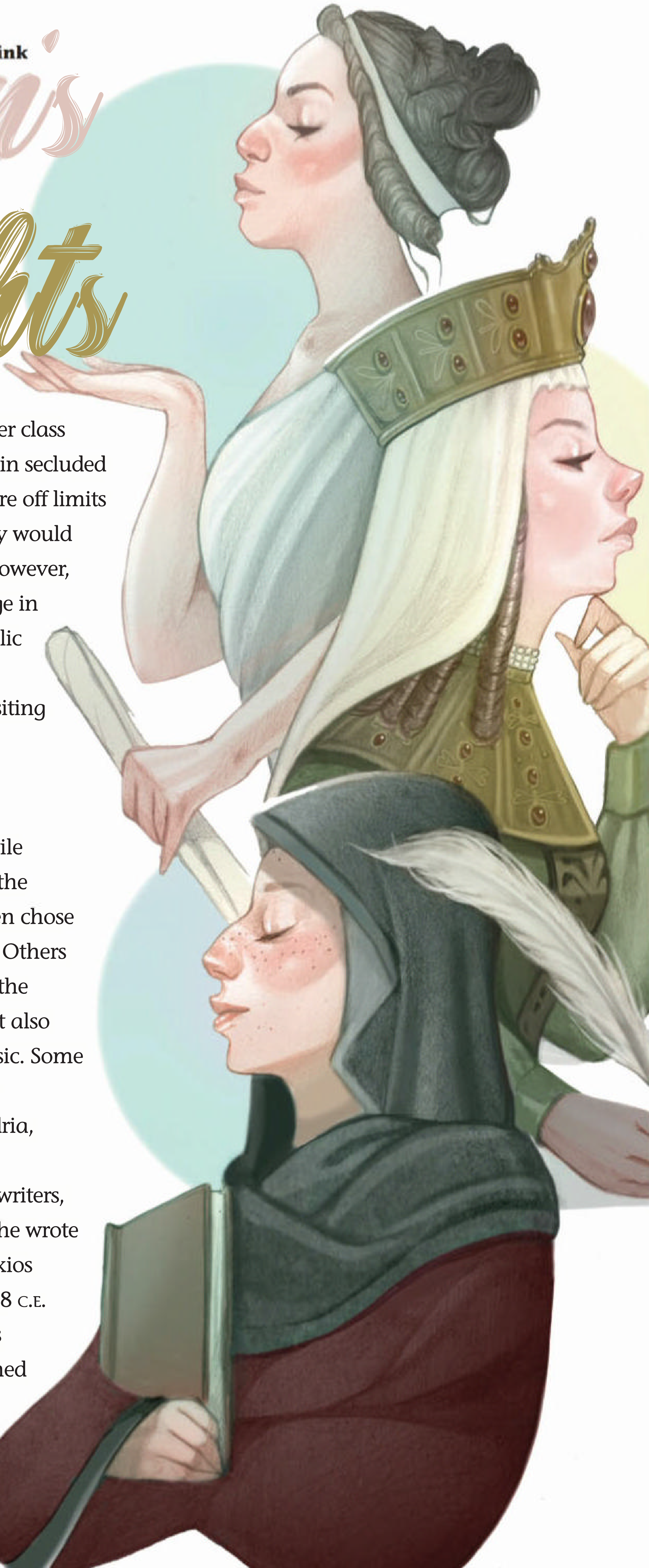
**Emily Abbink** *is a former field archaeologist, retired University of California Santa Cruz instructor in writing, anthropology, and American studies, and the author of three non-fiction books for children.*

**Feudalism was a system in which people were given land and protection by people of higher rank and, in turn, worked and fought for them in return.**

# Women's Rights

by Emily Abbink

illustrated by Lisa Fields



As with Greek and Roman women, most upper class Byzantine women spent much of their time in secluded women's quarters called *gynaikonitis* that were off limits to men. (Note: *Gyne* is Greek for "woman.") There they would spin and weave cloth. Many Byzantine women did, however, have access to basic education. They could also engage in certain areas of public life, including shopping in public markets, worshiping in church, socializing in public baths, visiting, attending church and public baths, visiting relatives, and participating in festivals.

## Writers and More

Many Byzantine women also cooked and owned textile businesses, inns, and shops. The law also gave them the right to inherit and control their money. Many women chose to support monasteries, schools, scholars, and artists. Others joined convents, which allowed them to live without the responsibilities of caring for a home. Life in a convent also afforded women time to study, write, or compose music. Some became scholars. A good example is the philosopher, astronomer, and mathematician Hypatia of Alexandria, Egypt (c. 370–415 C.E.).

While there are several notable Byzantine women writers, perhaps the best known is Princess Anna Komnene. She wrote the *Alexiad* about the reign of her father, Emperor Alexios Komnenos, which began in 1081 and lasted until 1118 C.E. Kassia the Poet, born in 810 C.E., was a nun, as well as a prolific poet and composer. She founded and governed a convent near Constantinople and wrote many hymns, some of which are still performed today in Orthodox Church services.

## In Control

Several women ruled the Byzantine Empire in their own names or as co-regents. Male military leaders were the norm, but intelligent and strong-willed women, or those who were closely related to heirs and rulers, were occasionally crowned. This was a departure from the Western Roman Empire, which prohibited women from ruling directly.

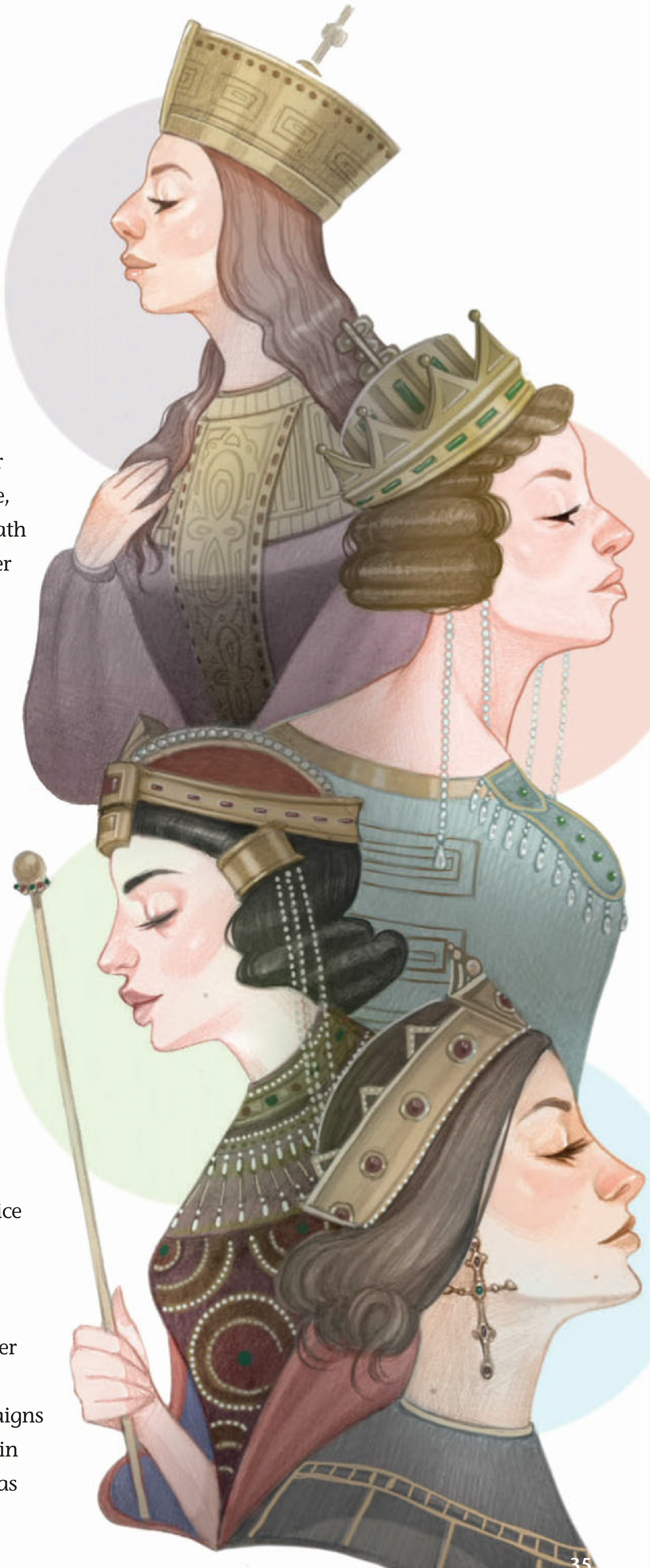
When Princess Pulcheria's royal father died in 414 C.E., she declared herself Empress Regent for her younger brother, Theodosius. When he came of age, she continued to wield great influence. After his death in 450 C.E., Pulcheria again took the throne until her death three years later.

Empress Theodora ruled jointly with her husband, Justinian I, for more than 20 years. Despite her humble background as an actress and the daughter of a dancing-bear trainer, Theodora ruled well. She is remembered for championing the rights of women. She instituted policies that prohibited violence against women, insured greater financial security for wives, and expanded divorce, child guardianship, and property ownership rights for women. Theodora also built convents. These offered women shelter and more chances to study.

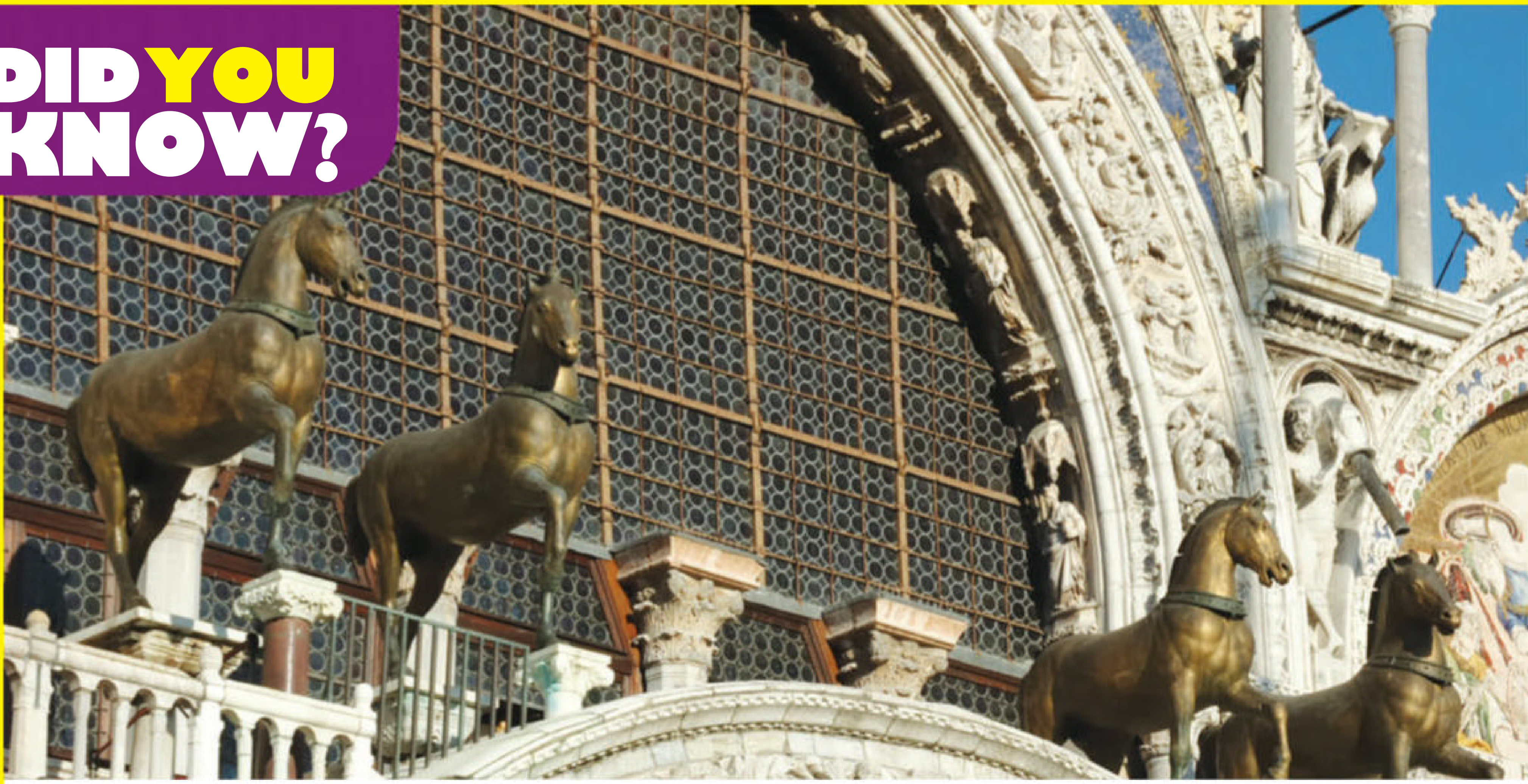
## At the Helm As Well

Queen Irene, widow of Emperor Leo IV, reigned as co-regent for their young son. She is best known for ending iconoclasm (the destruction of religious images — see pages 18–19) and restoring the practice of making icons, especially as church decor, an important aspect of Byzantine art.

The last woman to rule the empire was Anna Dalassena, who died in 1100 C.E. She was the mother of Emperor Alexios I Comnenus. After Alexios was crowned, he spent the next 15 years leading campaigns against the Turks. He appointed his mother to rule in his absence and decreed that any order she gave was to be treated as though it came from him.



**DID YOU KNOW?**



# The Four Horses of Byzantium

**by Sarah Novak**

Strong and spirited, these four horses are forever poised to surge into battle, show off in a victory parade, or dash onto a racetrack. The life-size statues, made of bronze, were created as a team for a four-horse chariot, called a *quadriga.* Their epic journey through the Byzantine Empire and beyond began somewhere in the ancient world, probably Rome. Later — no one is sure exactly when or how — they ended up in Constantinople, capital of the Byzantine empire. Here they were most likely displayed at the city's huge racetrack, the Hippodrome.

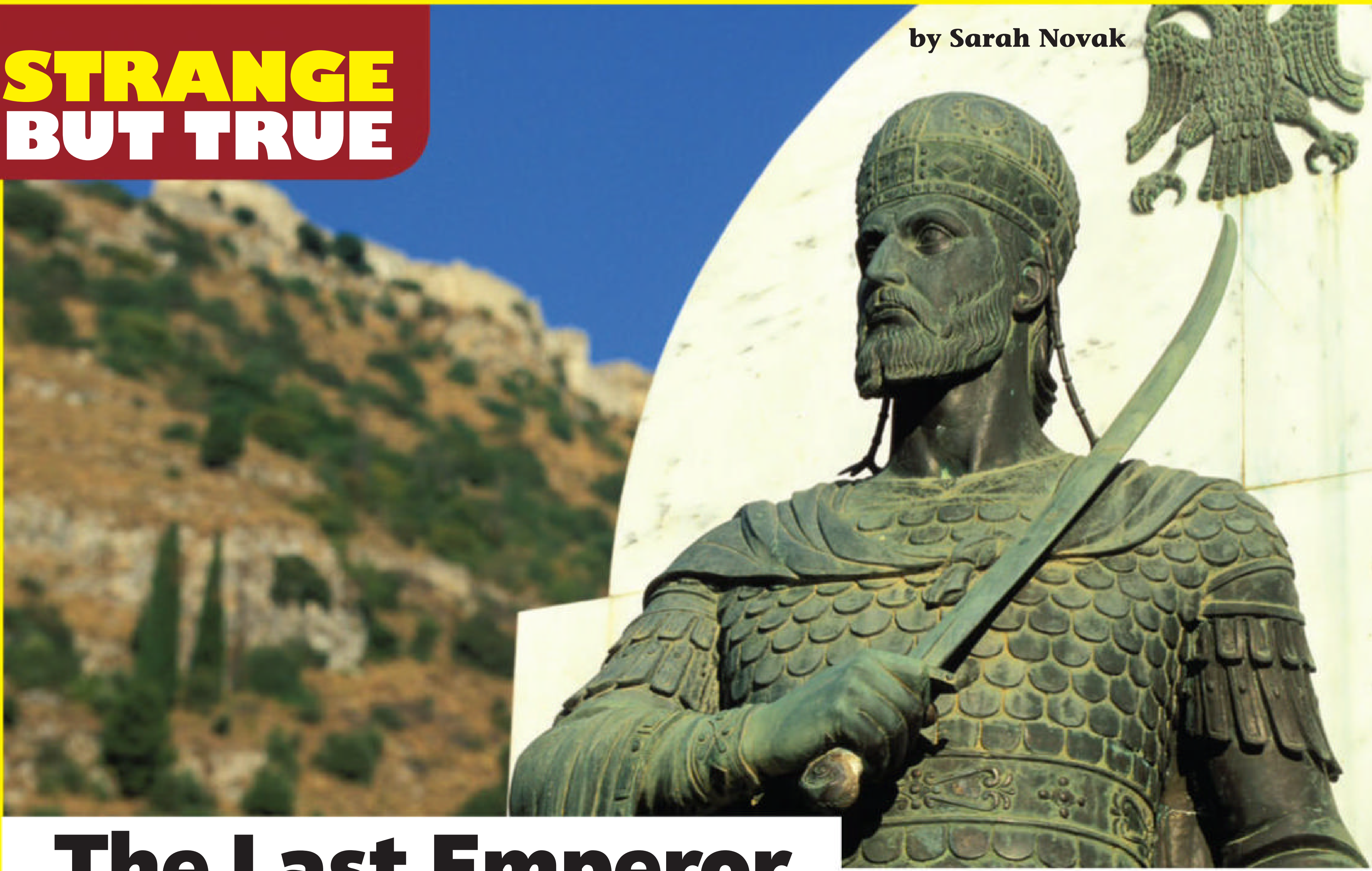
Centuries later, in 1204, Constantinople was captured by armies of the Fourth Crusade, with forces from Venice (see page 5). The Venetian victors helped themselves to Constantinople's treasures, including the four horses. The statues were set over the entrance to Saint Mark's church in Venice, overlooking the city's main square. The 14th-century Italian poet Petrarch wrote admiringly that the horses "stand as if alive, seeming to neigh from on high and to paw with their feet." They became a beloved symbol of the city's power and beauty.

But five centuries later, another military victor claimed the horses. The French general Napoleon Bonaparte took control of Venice in 1797. He sent the statues, as well as many other works of art, to Paris, France's capital. There the horses were put atop a triumphal arch built in Napoleon's honor, the *Arc du Carrousel.* But after Napoleon was defeated in 1815, the horses went back to Venice and Saint Mark's. They stayed there, except for two excursions — for safekeeping during World War I and World War II.

**Did you know?** In more recent times, another danger threatened the horses: air pollution. So, the last journey the four horses made brought them to a museum inside Saint Mark's. Replicas of the statues took their place outside (see photo above).

**Sarah Novak** *is a writer who explores the less traveled byways of history and tells tales from folklore and legend.*

by Sarah Novak



# The Last Emperor

They were outnumbered. How much longer could they hold out? The defenders of Constantinople were trapped in their once-mighty city, the capital of the Byzantine Empire. The massive city walls still protected them. But outside the walls was a vast enemy force — the Ottoman Turks. The Turks had arrived on April 6, 1453, to besiege the city. Their leader was Sultan Mehmet II. He was only 21 years old. But he commanded an army of at least 50,000 soldiers, probably thousands more. He also commanded a fleet of more than 100 ships. His fearsome cannons could blast their stone balls for a mile (see also pages 50–53).

And the forces of Constantinople? Maybe 7,000, and that number included Greek troops and soldiers from Genoa and Venice in Italy. Citizens with their own weapons volunteered. Even the city's monks joined the battle. The ordinary people of Constantinople did their part, too. They served as watchmen on the walls, and they gathered food. They fixed the battered city walls the best they could.

The Turkish siege dragged on. But Constantinople's defenders stayed put. Their inspiration? The Byzantine emperor himself. Constantine XI Paleologus (statue of him above) refused to surrender to Mehmet. And he refused to leave his city. During the siege, he fought off Turkish attacks alongside his soldiers. Sometimes, he had to persuade his soldiers not to fight each other.

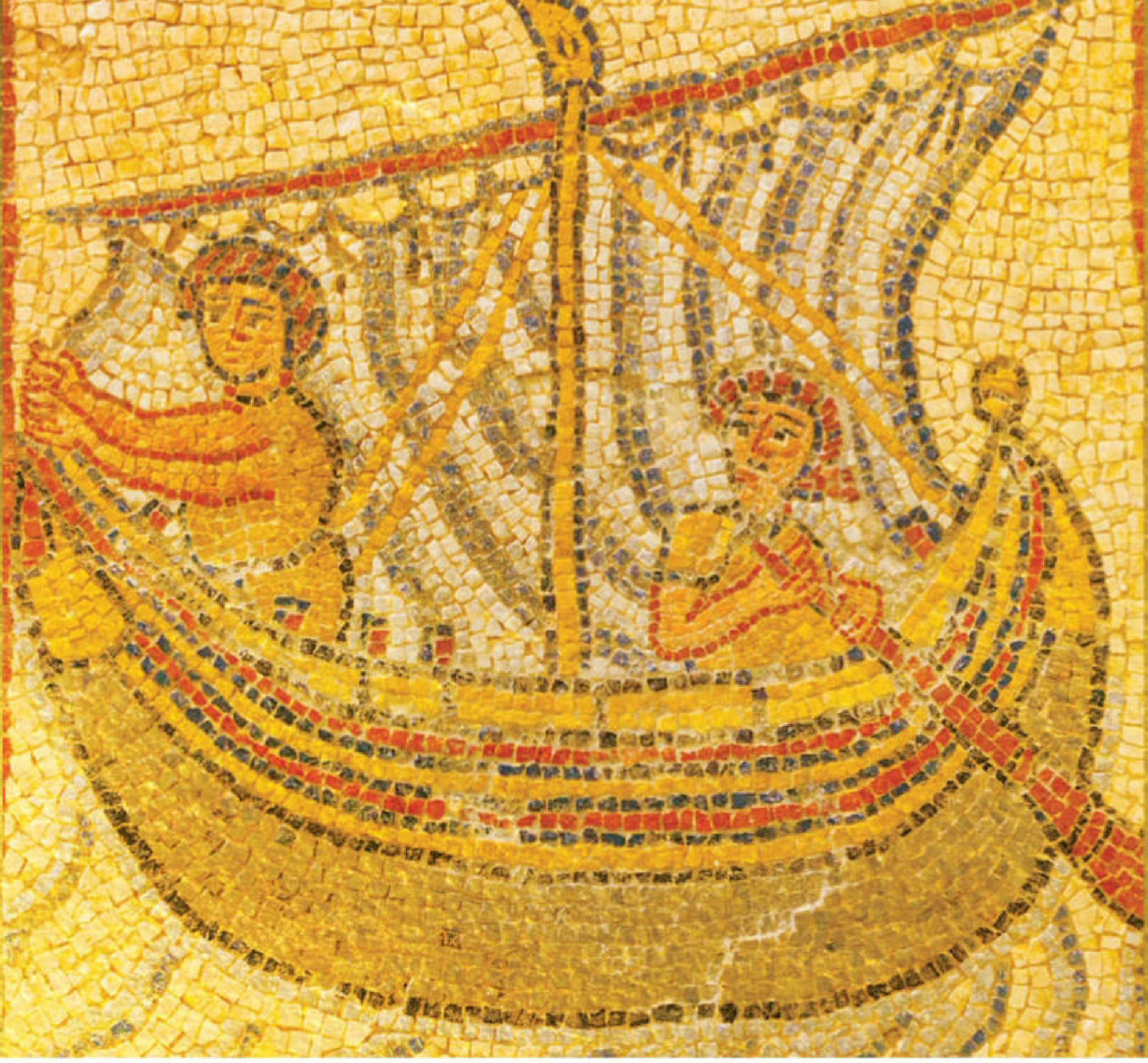
Early in the morning of May 29, the Turks broke through a gate in the city walls. As they poured in, Constantine rushed right into the battle. "Brave soldiers!" he shouted. "Keep fighting!" Constantine died along with many of his soldiers. His body was never found or recognized.

With Constantine's death the Byzantine Empire ended. But the emperor's legend lived on. Stories say that even now Constantine is sleeping beneath Constantinople's walls. There he waits, until some day when he will return to the city he so loved and defended.

# THE GOLDEN AGE & THEN ANOTHER

by Emily Abbink

The Eastern Roman Empire, the so-called Byzantine Empire, experienced two Golden Ages — that is, periods of relative peace, economic growth, territorial expansion, and cultural achievements and prosperity. While culturally Greek and increasingly Christian, the Byzantine Empire practiced and preserved much that was classic Roman culture. In effect, Byzantine society and scholarship bridged the gap between Europe's ancient civilizations and the much later Italian Renaissance, an era that would re-embrace ancient Greek and Roman ideals.



**This Byzantine mosaic of a ship, with its sail filled with wind, dates to the mid-500s C.E.**

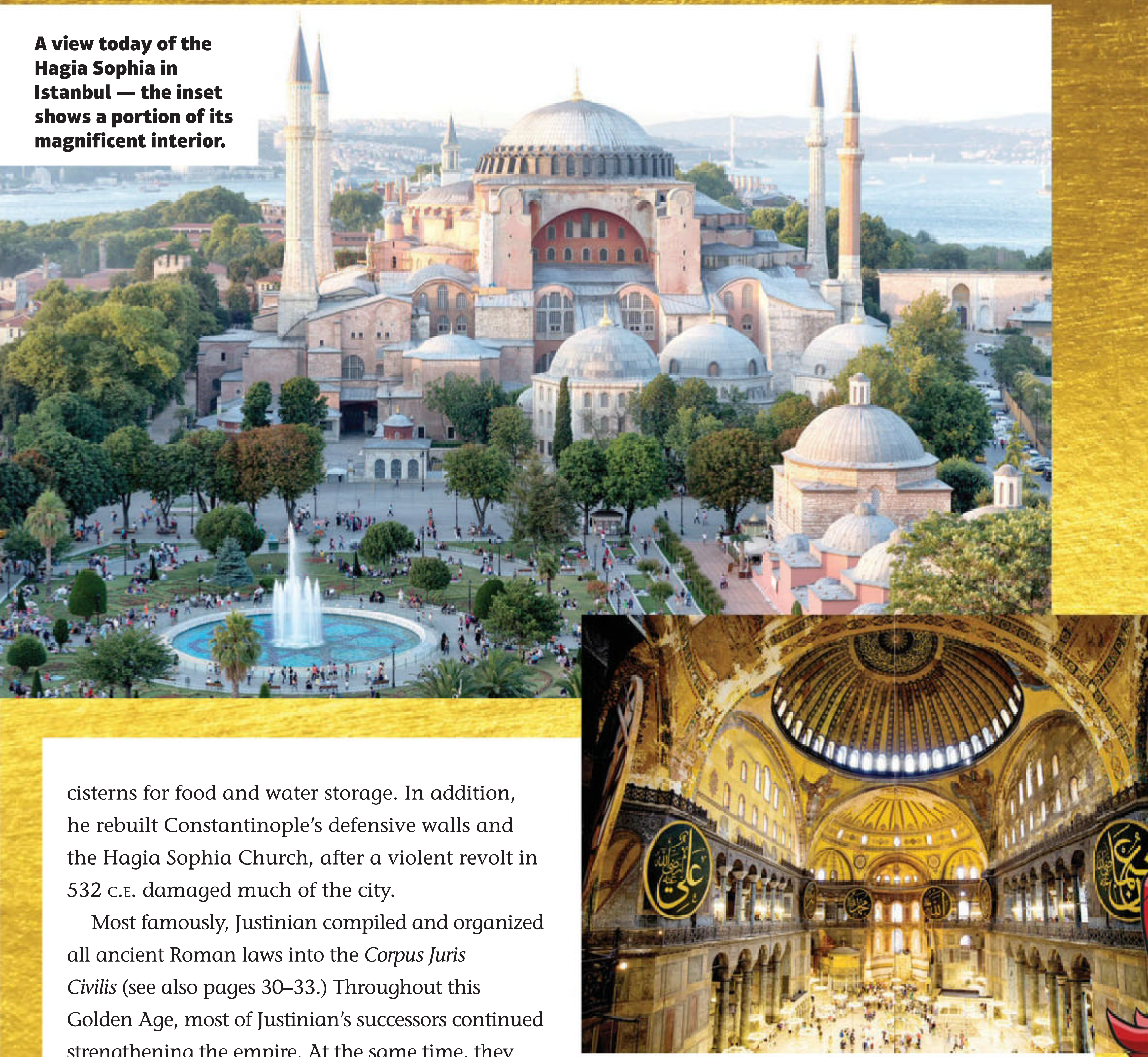
The Byzantine capital, Constantinople, was strategically located at the crossroads of Europe, Asia, and Africa. The emperor Constantine built Constantinople into a vibrant city that included strong defensive walls, public buildings, schools, and a grand palace. He also introduced a stable government and a monetary system that was used empire-wide, making it adaptable enough for trade. Both innovations encouraged economic growth, and Constantinople soon became a center for trade, arts, and culture.

Constantine was the empire's first Christian emperor. As such, he paved the way for Christianity to become the empire's dominant religion (see pages 10–13). He also ordered many churches built throughout the empire, including Jerusalem's Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

## The First Golden Age: 518–565 C.E.

Constantinople was now the world's most populated city with about 450,000 inhabitants. It was also the economic hub of the ancient world. The Byzantines controlled much of the trade throughout the Mediterranean world. They produced hardware and textiles, in addition to luxury goods, including silk. Huge ships transported grain for its citizens and for export (see above). Such wealth allowed Constantinople to pay off would-be invaders and to finance a strong military, social services, and the arts.

This Golden Age's best-known emperor, Justinian I, ascended the throne in 527 C.E. Hoping to revive Rome's ancient glory, Justinian recaptured the northern coast of Africa, Italy, southern Spain, and much of southeastern Europe. All these lands had once been under Roman control. Justinian also constructed dams, roads, and bridges to facilitate trade, communications, and military movements. He fortified borders, restored cities leveled by warfare and earthquakes, built new churches, and installed huge granaries and underground



**A view today of the Hagia Sophia in Istanbul — the inset shows a portion of its magnificent interior.**

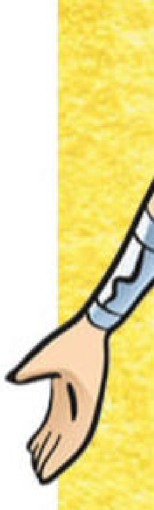
cisterns for food and water storage. In addition, he rebuilt Constantinople's defensive walls and the Hagia Sophia Church, after a violent revolt in 532 C.E. damaged much of the city.

Most famously, Justinian compiled and organized all ancient Roman laws into the *Corpus Juris Civilis* (see also pages 30–33.) Throughout this Golden Age, most of Justinian's successors continued strengthening the empire. At the same time, they encouraged the arts, architecture, education, and higher living standards. Byzantine literature flourished. The historian Procopius wrote *Wars of Justinian*, *Buildings of Justinian*, and *Secret History*. Paul the Silentiary penned love poems that described everyday life and recorded Hagia Sophia's new architecture and decor. Romanus the Melodist composed more than 1,000 religious hymns.

Byzantine society valued scholarship and made primary education available for boys in major cities. Constantinople's Imperial University, which had been founded in 425 C.E., was expanded. It offered classes in law, philosophy, medicine, arithmetic, astronomy, geometry, music, and rhetoric. Rulers also supported the city's Imperial Library, which preserved more than 100,000 volumes of classical Greek and Roman texts.

Perhaps most significant, this first Golden Age spread Christianity throughout the Byzantine

*Continued on page 42* »



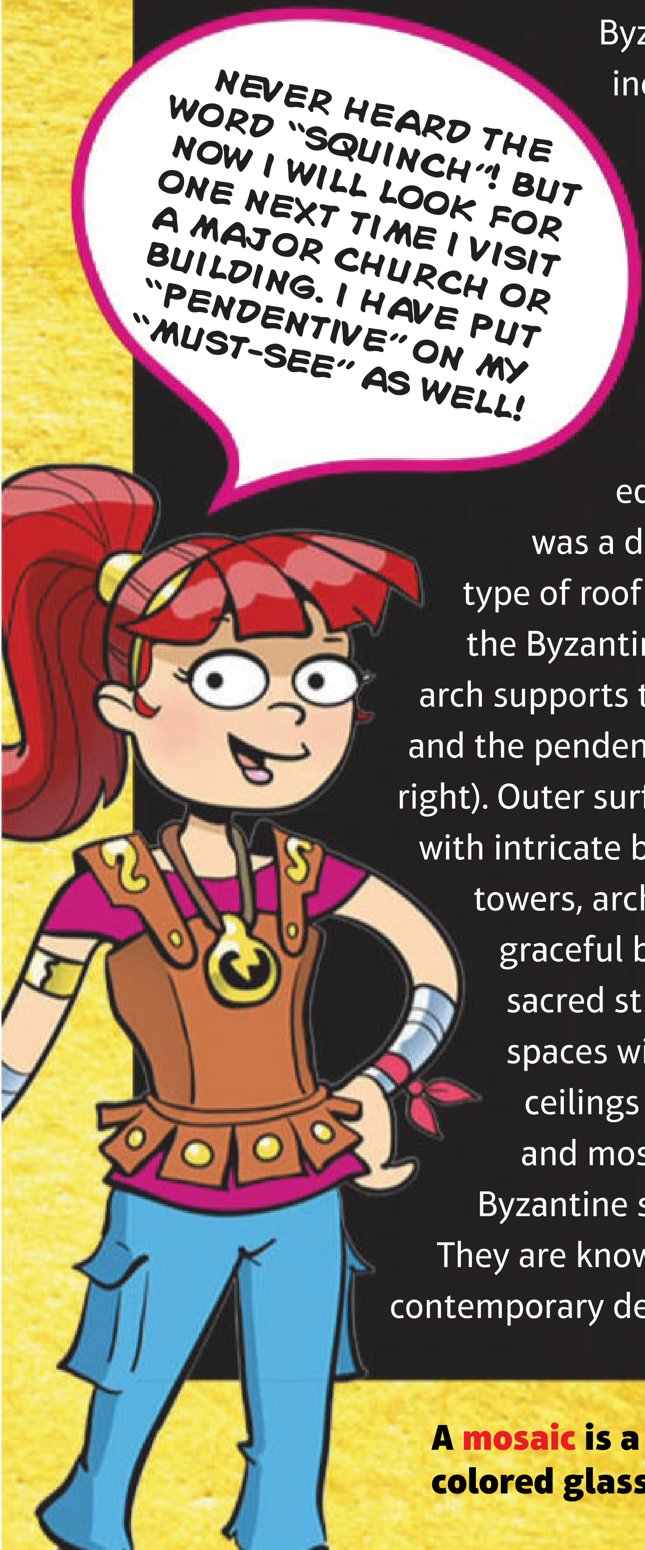
illustrations by John Gordon Swogger

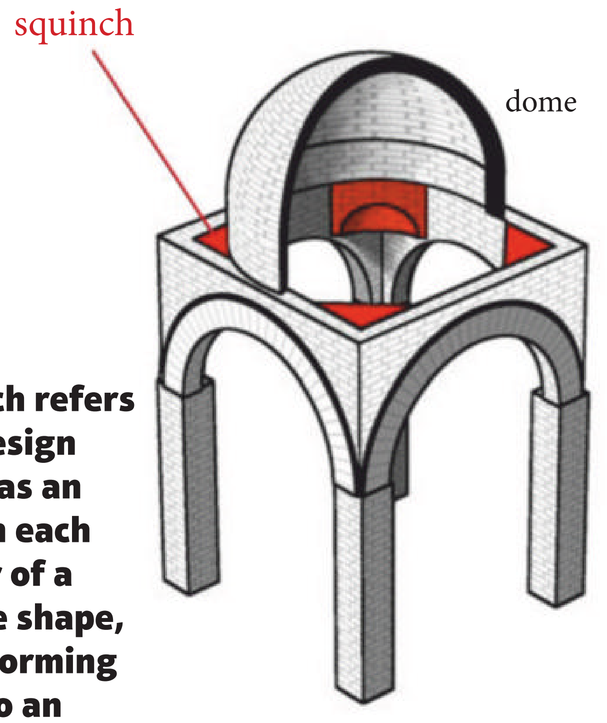
## Byzantine Arts

The Byzantines elaborated on ancient Roman **mosaic** art forms to decorate the interior of their churches. Byzantine artisans incorporated into their works glittering, colored-glass fragments and jewels. They used these objects to depict figures in scenes that included plants, animals, and starry skies. Complex and abstract patterns of glowing, colored marble shapes graced their floors. Magnificent examples of their work can be found in churches in Israel, Palestine, and Ravenna in Italy.

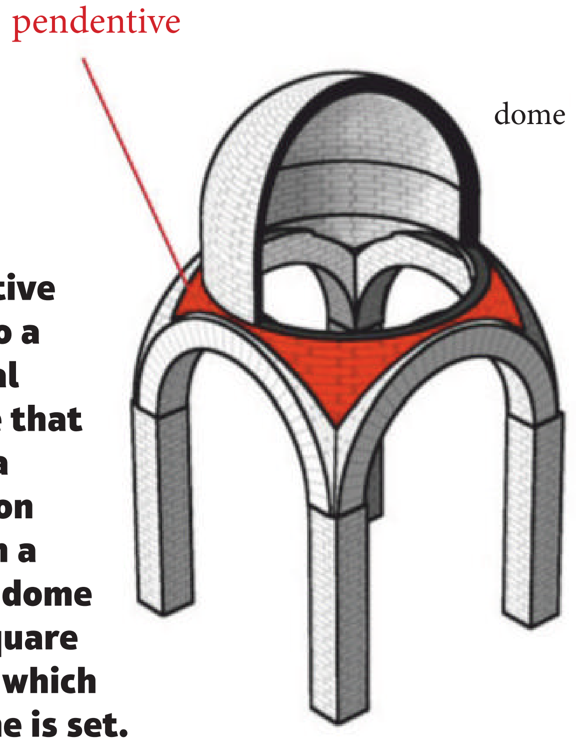
Illuminated icons featured religious figures painted on wood panels and incorporated dazzling wax pigments that often included gold leaf. These icons were not intended for worship. Rather they were seen as aids that could be used by people praying and meditating. Intricately colored, miniature illustrations often decorated Biblical texts. Today, the monastery of St. Catherine in Sinai, which was founded by the emperor Justinian, houses a beautiful collection of illuminated icons.

Byzantine architecture incorporated Roman temple design elements into its buildings. The Byzantine church plan, for example, featured a square central space that was set in a cross shape with four arms of equal length. Above this was a domed roof. To allow this type of roof to rest on a square base, the Byzantines used complicated arch supports that included the squinch and the pendentive (see illustrations at right). Outer surfaces were decorated with intricate brickwork patterns, towers, arched colonnades, and graceful buttresses. Byzantine sacred structures featured soaring spaces with vaulted, coffered ceilings and sumptuous marble and mosaic decor. Few secular Byzantine structures stand today. They are known mostly from contemporary descriptions.


NEVER HEARD THE WORD "SQUINCH"! BUT NOW I WILL LOOK FOR ONE NEXT TIME I VISIT A MAJOR CHURCH OR BUILDING. I HAVE PUT "PENDENTIVE" ON MY "MUST-SEE" AS WELL!



**Squinch refers to a design that has an arch in each corner of a square shape, transforming all into an octagon.**



**Pendentive refers to a spherical triangle that acts as a transition between a circular dome and a square base on which the dome is set.**

## Hagia Sophia

Originally a small church, the Hagia Sophia, or Church of the Holy Wisdom, was destroyed during riots in 532 C.E. Rebuilt in 537 C.E. as a grand new center of Eastern Christianity, it is considered one of history's greatest architectural achievements. The innovative design included a huge 105-foot dome supported on a pendentive and two semi-domes that rest on great marble piers. Window light reflects on the golden mosaics, concealing the supports and making the ceiling appear to float. Nine centuries after its construction, conquering Ottoman Turks converted Hagia Sophia into a magnificent mosque.

**A mosaic is a design that consists of small pieces of colored glass, pottery, or stone set in concrete or plaster.**

Empire. Byzantine emperors believed that a unified kingdom required a unified faith. While unjust to those of different beliefs, this policy did help to regulate the empire, both culturally and politically.

## Second: 867–1025 C.E.

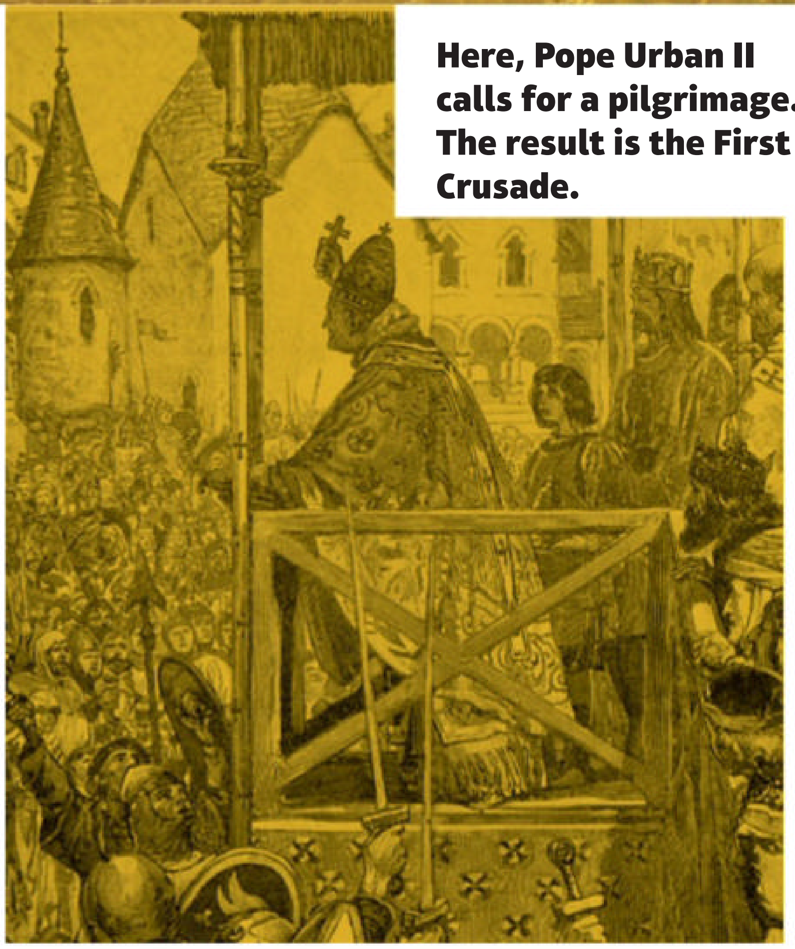
Emperor Basil's reign introduced the Second Golden Age. The decades that followed saw many able emperors, each of whom continued to strengthen Byzantine military and political authority. As a result, there was a cultural revival in philosophy, the arts, cultural and scientific innovation, and general literacy. The empire's rulers also continued to promote the spread of Christianity throughout Eastern Europe. Their promise to protect those who converted to Christianity from invading Muslims and attacking tribes helped to unify the Empire both culturally and politically. A strong civil service oversaw both foreign policy and domestic administration, including the collection of taxes. Increased trade promoted economic growth and better living standards. Less rigid class differences allowed some upward social movement, and more consistent law codes promoted relative peace.

One of this period's most important emperors was Leo VI. Also known as Leo the Wise, he oversaw the organization, reform, and expansion of Justinian's law codes. He also commissioned the magnificent Church of Avios Lazaros in Cyprus. In addition, he updated the emperor's territorial government and helped to organize and regulate the trade guilds.

Records tell of Leo's roaming Constantinople in disguise, searching for corruption and injustice. He once broke the law by walking at night after curfew and bribed two patrols to let him go, before a third patrol arrested him. Recognized in jail the next morning, Leo rewarded the arresting officer for doing his duty, while punishing the first two for accepting bribes.

Contact between east and west increased greatly during this period. Many foreign traders moved to Constantinople, along with numerous Western dignitaries. This helped spread Byzantine technology and culture westward. It also allowed a flow of Western ideas and customs to the east. Trade caravans and ships brought gemstones, luxuriant silks, brocades, and tapestries (see fragment of one below), while the splendor of the Byzantine royal court set the standard for royal decor throughout Europe. Renewed interest in literature and the philosophy of the ancient Greeks circulated through the empire. Also flowing west into Europe were Middle Eastern ideas. As a result, the cultural impact of Byzantine art on the west during this period was enormous and long-lasting.

**This fragment of fine silk tapestry dates to around 900 C.E. and is of the type made for Byzantine and Sassanian royal courts.**

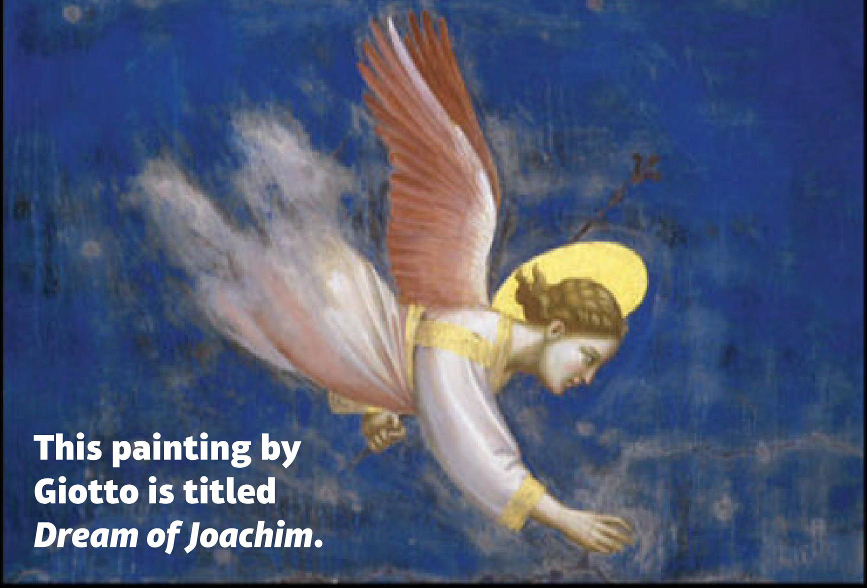


**Here, Pope Urban II calls for a pilgrimage. The result is the First Crusade.**

## Threats Bring Disaster

By the late 11th century, Muslim threats from the south and east had increased. The Golden Age came to an end, as Byzantine emperors turned to the West for help. Pope Urban II (see illustration above) saw the situation as an opportunity to unite the Eastern and Western Christian Churches. In 1095, he called for an armed pilgrimage to free the city of Jerusalem from the Muslims. At the same time, he saw the pilgrimage as a way to check Muslim advances on Byzantine borders. Western Europe's response was the First Crusade.

Over time, many Crusades traveled through Constantinople. The goal of each was to stop the Muslim advance, but each served to weaken the empire. Between 1200 and 1453, many scholars and artists left Constantinople for the west, further undermining Byzantine power. This "brain drain" contributed greatly to a revived western interest in Greek and Roman studies. This interest led to what is known as the Renaissance, a period of growth and activity in Europe that focused on a rediscovery of Greek and Roman art, architecture, and literature.



**This painting by Giotto is titled *Dream of Joachim*.**

## A Prelude to the Renaissance

As the Byzantine Empire declined, it saw a revival of Greek culture and thought. This movement, which is sometimes referred to as the Second Byzantine Renaissance, helped to shape the Italian Renaissance. Starting in the late 14th century and through the fall of Constantinople in 1453, many Byzantine scholars came to work in Italian universities. They taught Greek philosophy, as well as Greek language. They also translated ancient Greek manuscripts into Latin. In doing so, they made ancient Greek thought directly accessible to Italian readers. In addition, Byzantine scholars known as grammarians created dictionaries, handbooks, and grammar books. This connection to ancient Greece helped Italian thinkers understand and embrace the **humanist** ideas so important to the Renaissance.

Byzantine influence on the Italian Renaissance may also be seen in art. While Italian painters had been copying and modifying the two-dimensional and decorative style of Byzantine painting for many years, Italian Renaissance painting is known for its three-dimensional and natural-looking figures. It is also known for how faces depict human emotions. Many scholars believe that this more emotional or natural style was influenced by the Byzantine painters who worked in Italy.

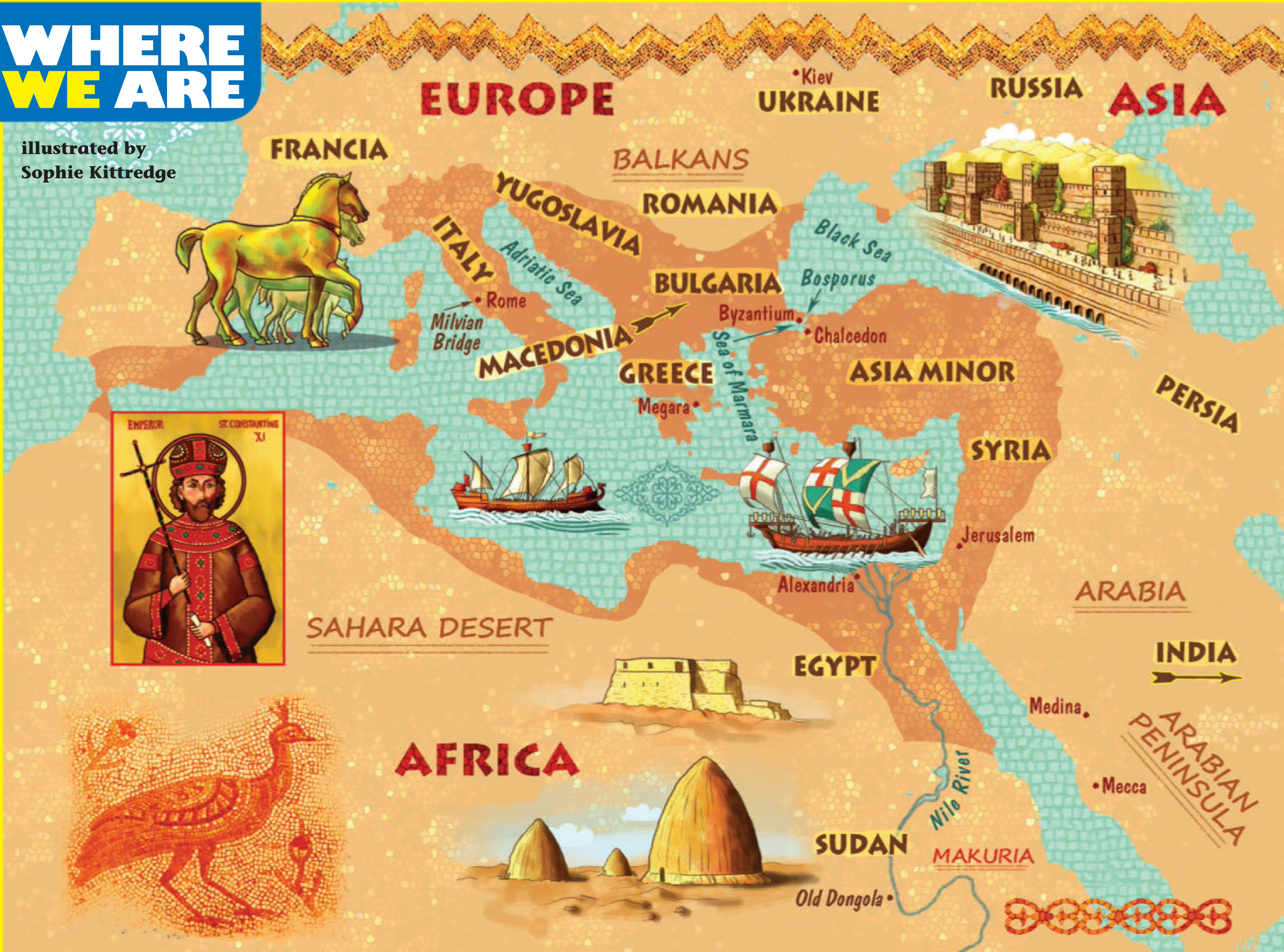
The best-known Italian Renaissance painter said to be influenced by Byzantine art is Giotto di Bondone (c. 1267–1337). Considered the first painter of the Italian Renaissance, he is often known as the "father of modern painting." While many scholars see Giotto's work as a rejection of Byzantine style, some art historians suggest that Giotto was inspired by the work of Byzantine painters who had been active in Italy for centuries (one of his paintings pictured above).

**— Regina Hansen**

**A humanist encourages humanism, the belief that people can achieve happiness and live well without religion.**

# WHERE WE ARE

illustrated by
Sophie Kittredge

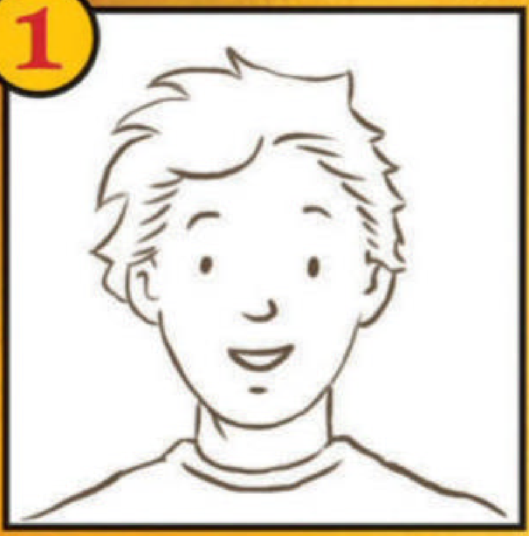

EUROPE
•Kiev
UKRAINE
RUSSIA
ASIA
FRANCIA
BALKANS
YUGOSLAVIA
ROMANIA
ITALY
Adriatic Sea
Black Sea
BULGARIA
Bosporus
•Rome
Milvian Bridge
Byzantium
•Chalcedon
MACEDONIA
Sea of Marmara
GREECE
ASIA MINOR
PERSIA
Megara•
EMPEROR
ST. CONSTANTINE XI
SYRIA
Jerusalem
Alexandria
ARABIA
SAHARA DESERT
EGYPT
INDIA
Medina
ARABIAN PENINSULA
AFRICA
Nile River
•Mecca
SUDAN
MAKURIA
Old Dongola•

by John Gordon-Swogger

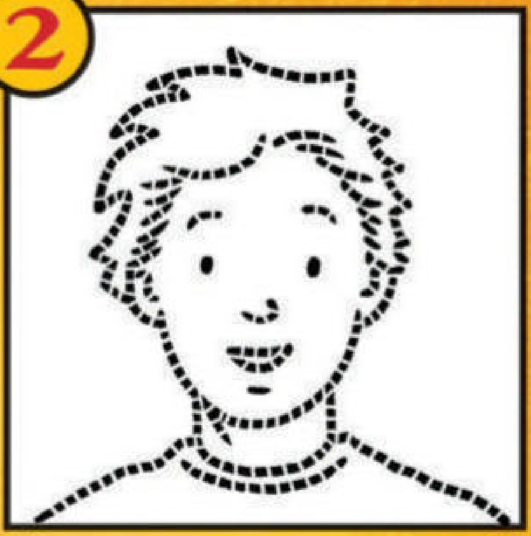
# Draw A Byzantine Mosaic

Start with a simple pencil drawing (1) and draw the outline in black pen using dashed lines (2). Then, draw pencil lines for the individual tiles around the outlined spaces (3). Draw lines of tiles that show the contours of the drawing — curve them around the edges of shapes, just as Byzantine mosaic makers did. In the background, you can draw the lines of tiles to make curves, circles, or sunburst-like lines (3). Now, color in each tile, using a range of shades to bring out the shape of your drawing (3). If you want a bit of practice first, try coloring in the mosaic of the Empress Theodora, below. Use plenty of bright purples and golds to get that real Byzantine look!

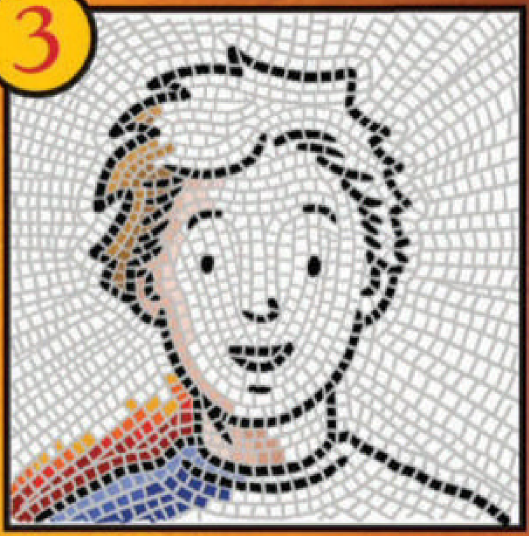
1

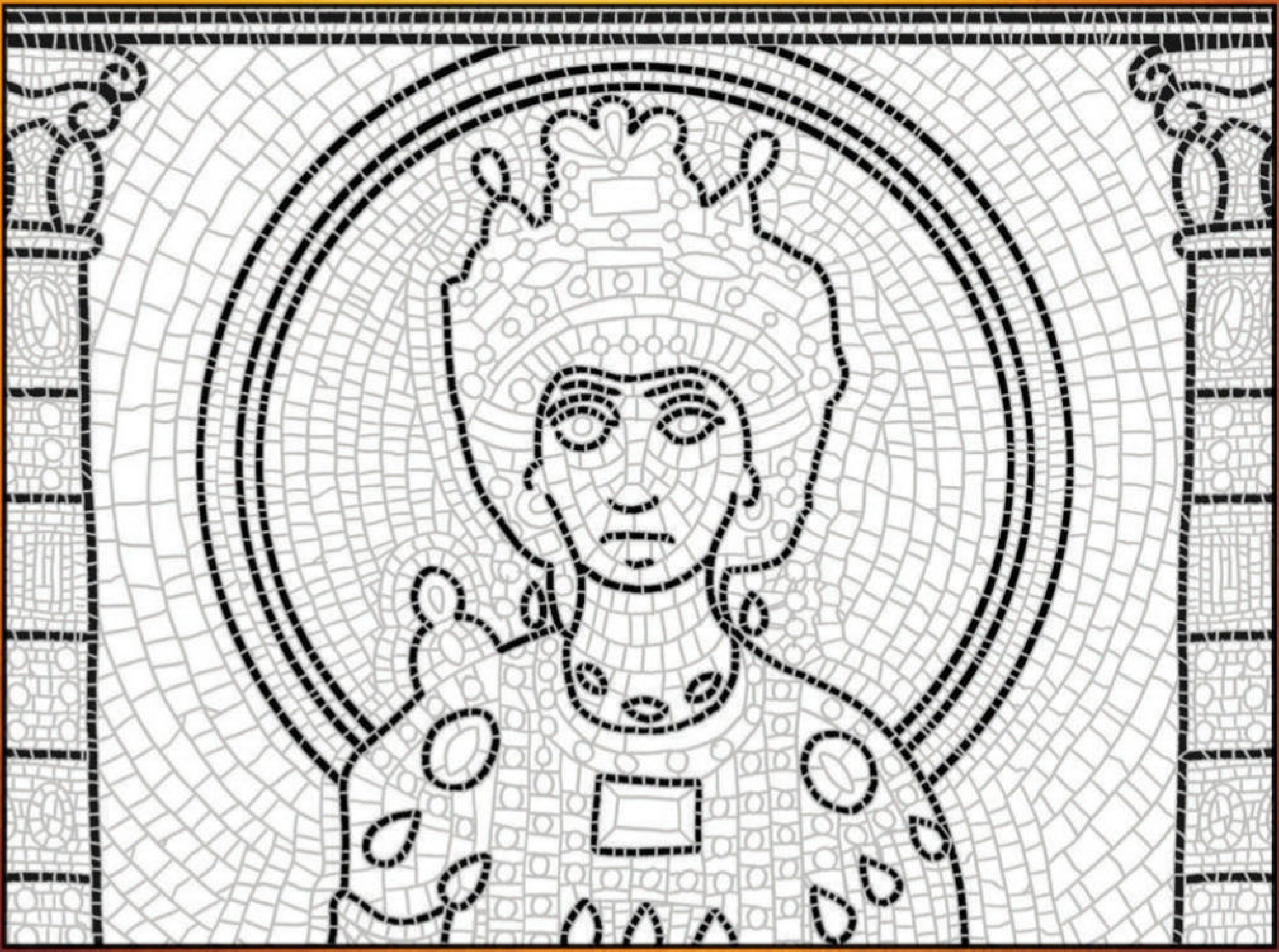


2



3





Spark!Lab Dr. InBae Yoon
2019 Invent It Challenge
SPARK!LAB
Think about a new invention that enhances the daily lives of older adults.
Submit your invention by April 5, 2019.
No purchase necessary to win.
For entry information and eligibility, go to inventitchallenge2019.epals.com.
Smithsonian
Cricket Media

## CONSULTING EDITORS

**Emily Abbink**, former field archaeologist, retired University of California Santa Cruz instructor in writing, anthropology, and American studies; **Jack Cheng**, archaeologist and writer; **Susan Douglass**, director, K-14 Education Outreach program at the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.; **Regina Hansen**, master lecturer of rhetoric at Boston University, Massachusetts; **Anthony Hollingsworth**, professor of Classical languages at Roger Williams University, Rhode Island; **Sona Hoisington**, retired university professor and specialist in Russian culture; **Justin D. Lyons**, associate professor in the Department of History and Government at Cedarville University, Ohio

## ADVISORY BOARD

Paul G. Bahn: Archaeologist and Author; Nancy S. Bernard: Archaeologist; Diane L. Brooks, Ed.D.: Director (retired), Curriculum Frameworks and Instructional Resources Office, California Department of Education; Vaughn M. Bryant: Director, Palynology Laboratory in Department of Anthropology, Texas A&M University; Ken Burns: Florentine Films; Ross E. Dunn: Professor of History, San Diego State University; Peter Feinman: Director, Institute of History, Anthropology and Education; Richard A. Gould: Chairman and Professor, Department of Anthropology, Brown University; Gordon Grimwade: Archaeologist and Writer, Australia; A. Gwynn Henderson: Kentucky Archaeological Society; Donald James Johnson: Professor Emeritus, New York University; Jean Elliott Johnson: Teacher and Director (Retired) of the Asia Society's TeachAsia Project; Martha S. Joukowsky: Professor Emerita, Brown University, Department of Anthropology Center for Old World Archaeology and Art; Director, Brown University Petra 'Great' Temple Excavations; Richard A. Lobban, Jr.: Archaeologist and Executive Director Sudan Studies Association; Elena Miklashevich: Kemerovo State University, Russia; Robert B. Pickering: Director of Curatorial Affairs and Public Programs, Gilcrease Museum, and Director, Museum Science and Management, University of Tulsa; Margarete Pruech: Art historian, Archaeologist, and Lecturer in East Asian Art; Joseph M. Pucci: Associate Professor of Classics, Medieval Studies, and Comparative Literature, Brown University; Heidi Roupp: Past President, World History Association; Shirley J. Schermer: Office of the State Archaeologist, University of Iowa; KC Smith: Museum of Florida History; Sandra Stotsky: Professor of Education Reform, 21st Century Chair in Teacher Quality, University of Arkansas; Elizabeth ten Grotenhuis: Professor Emerita, Boston University, and Founding Head of Birches School in Lincoln, Massachusetts.

DIG (ISSN 1539-7130) (USPS 000-943) is published 9 times a year, monthly except for combined May/June, July/August, and November/December issues, by Cricket Media, 70 East Lake Street, Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60601. Additional Editorial Office located at 1751 Pinnacle Drive, Suite 600, McLean, VA 22102. Periodicals postage paid at McLean, VA, and at additional mailing offices. For address changes, back issues, subscriptions, customer service, or to renew, please visit shop.cricketmedia.com, email cricketmedia@cdsfulfillment.com, write to DIG P.O. Box 6395, Harlan, IA 51593-1895, or call 1-800-821-0115. Postmaster: Please send address changes to DIG, P.O. Box 6395, Harlan, IA 51593-1895.

Editorial office, 70 E. Lake Street, Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60601. March 2019, Volume 21 , Number 3,
© 2019, Carus Publishing dba Cricket Media. All rights reserved, including right of reproduction in whole or in part, in any form.
For information regarding our privacy policy and compliance with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act, please visit our website at cricketmedia.com or write to us at CMG COPPA, 70 East Lake Street, Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60601.

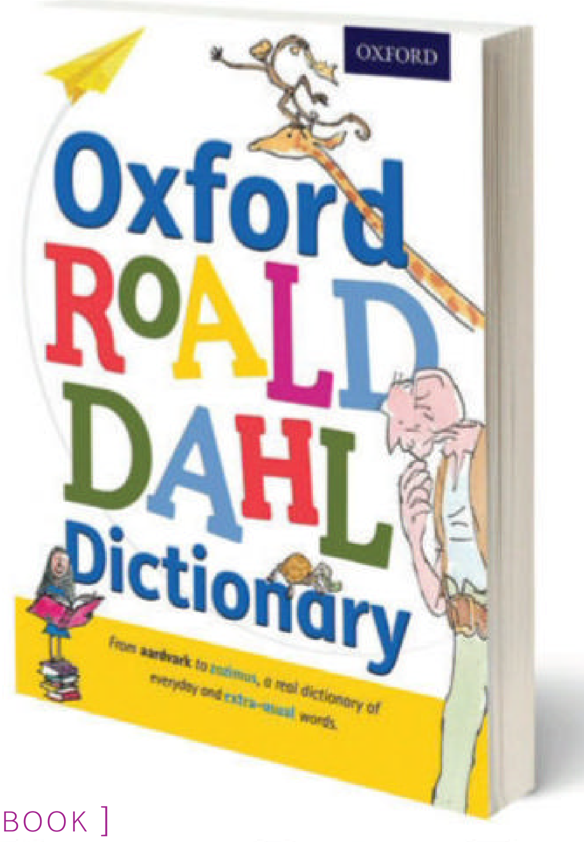
Picture Credits: Peter Horree/Alamy Stock Photo: front cover, 12; Lanmas/Alamy Stock Photo: 3; Benedictus/Shutterstock.com: 4; Aleks49/Shutterstock.com: 5; Aleks49/Shutterstock.com: 6 (top); Eduardo Estellez/Shutterstock.com: 6 (second); Bobica10/Shutterstock.com: 6 (third); Harry Wedzinga/Shutterstock.com: 6 (fourth); wantanddo/Shutterstock.com: 6 (fifth); vkilikov/Shutterstock.com: 6 (sixth); Musee Conde Chantilly, France/Bridgeman Images: 7; Art Collection 2/Alamy Stock Photo: 10–11; Heritage Image Partnership Ltd/Alamy Stock Photo: 13 (top); Melissa Jooste/Alamy Stock Photo: 13 (bottom); Sonia Halliday/Alamy Stock Photo: 14; Matej Kastelic/Shutterstock.com: 15; Andrey Mertsalov/Shutterstock.com: 16 (phone); Chronicle/Alamy Stock Photo: 18; Bambuh/Shutterstock.com: 18–19 (background design); The Picture Art Collection/Alamy Stock Photo: 19; Samnt/Shutterstock.com: 20 (top); © Ivy Close Images (www.ivycloseimages.com: 20 (bottom); Sonia Halliday Photo Library/Alamy Stock Photo: 21; SPUTNIK/Alamy Stock Photo: 23; North Wind Picture Archives/Alamy Stock Photo: 24, 50–51; © Jack Cheng: 26–27, 27, 28–29, 29; caesart/Shutterstock.com: 26–27 (background), 28–29 (background); © Look ad Learn/Bridgeman Images: 30–31; Artokoloro Quint Lox Limited/Alamy Stock Photo: 32–33; mountainpix/Shutterstock.com: 36; MARKA/Alamy Stock Photo: 37; O. Cecil/Alamy Stock Photo: 39; Mehmet Cetin/Shutterstock.com: 49 (top); Artur Bogacki/Shutterstock.com: 40 (inset); Pictures from History/Bridgeman Images: 42; Art Directors & TRIP/Alamy Stock Photo: 43 (left); Scrovegni (Arena) Chapel, Padua, Italy/Cameraphoto Arte Venezia /Bridgeman Images: 43 (right); nevio/Shutterstock.com: 49; David Coleman/Alamy Stock Photo: 52; imageBROKER/Alamy Stock Photo: 52–53; Adam Jan Figel'/Alamy Stock Photo: 54; art_pro/Shutterstock.com: 54–55 (background design); REUTERS/Alessandro Garofalo: 55; Robert Kawka/Alamy Stock Photo: 57; World History Archive/Alamy Stock Photo: back cover (top); Kerimtrn/Shutterstock.com: back cover (bottom). Cricket Media has made every effort to trace the copyrights of these images.

Printed in the United States of America.

1st printing Quad/Graphics Midland, Michigan February 2019

From time to time, DIG mails to its subscribers advertisements for other Cricket Media products or makes its subscriber list available to other reputable companies for their offering of products and services. If you prefer not to receive such mail, write to us at DIG, P.O. Box 6395, Harlan, IA 51593-1895.

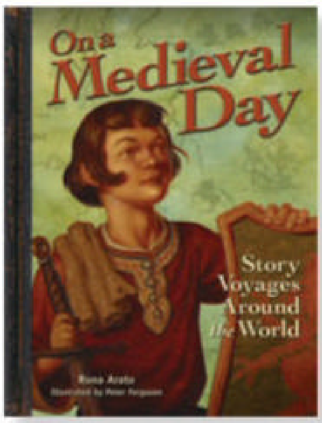
# OFF THE SHELF


OXFORD
Oxford
ROALD
DAHL
Dictionary
From aardvark to zozimus, a real dictionary of everyday and extra-usual words

[ BOOK ]

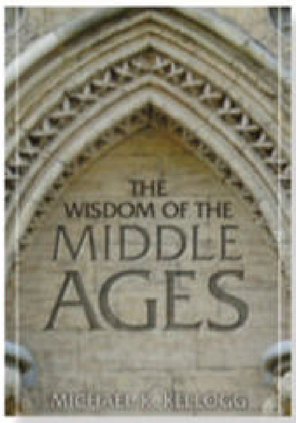
## From A to Z

***Oxford Roald Dahl Dictionary,*** (Oxford, 2018, ***www.oup.com/us***) will have anyone who opens it smiling at just the first glance! A great way to interest readers (of most any age) in words! "Did You Know?" tidbits, delightful illustrations, cross-references to where each entry appears in Dahl's works, and colorful letter and page markers spice up each page. Enjoy!


On a Medieval Day
Story Voyages Around the World
Rona Arato

[ BOOK ]

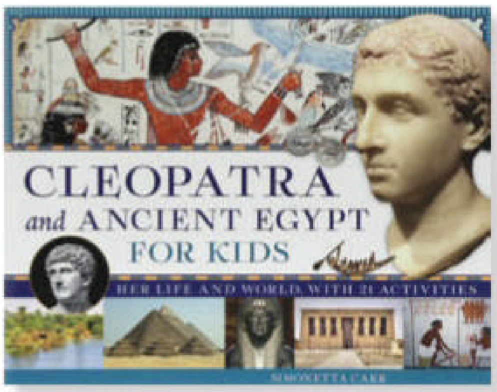
***On a Medieval Day: Story Voyages Around the World*** by Rona Arato (Maple Tree, 2010, ***www.owlkids.com***) is unique in that it focuses not just on European cultures but on cultures from Japan to Mali. Each of the nine tales centers on a youth, age 12 to 14, and how he/she interacted with neighbors, officials, and difficulties. Really interesting.


THE WISDOM OF THE MIDDLE AGES
MICHAEL K. KELLOGG

[ BOOK ]

***The Wisdom of the Middle Ages*** by Michael K. Kellogg (Prometheus, 2016, ***www.prometheusbooks.com***) offers an insightful, well-researched, and engaging view of this period in European history that led to the Renaissance and much of the Western thought today.

### Check These Out, Too!


CLEOPATRA and ANCIENT EGYPT FOR KIDS
HER LIFE AND WORLD, WITH 21 ACTIVITIES
SIMONETTA CARR

[ BOOK ]

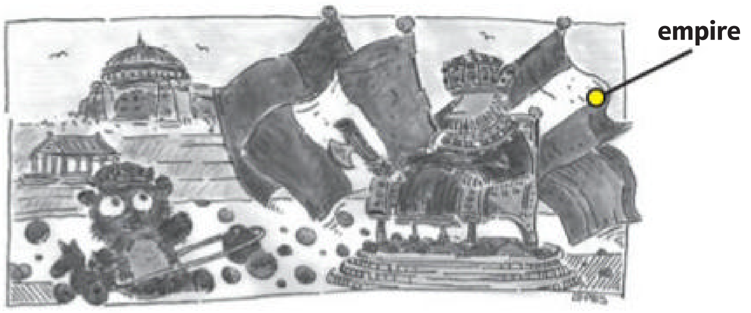
***Cleopatra and Ancient Egypt for Kids: Her Life and World, with 21 Activities*** by Simonetta Carr (2018, Chicago Review, ***www.chicagoreviewpress.com***) offers a great historical overview of the period, accompanied by interesting sidebars (Egyptian Art, for example) and projects (mummify a hot dog, for example). Included as well are a glossary, time line, and current and recent research.

# ON THE NET

- This site tells of continuity and change in the Byzantine Empire: ***www.khanacademy.org/humanities/world-history/medieval-times/byzantine-empire/a/the-rise-of-the-byzantine-empire***
- Empires — there have been many throughout history. Click here for the PBS link to its engaging series that focused on empires throughout history: ***www.pbs.org/empires***
- Here's an article about chariot racing in Byzantine times — quite a wild ride! ***www.smithsonianmag.com/history/blue-versus-green-rocking-the-byzantine-empire-113325928***

## Answers

**Answers: Fun with Words, pg 16**



**A Byzantine emperor sits on a throne decorated with the flags of France, Portugal, Italy, and Spain, from which we get EMPIRE. In the background are a Roman temple and the Hagia Sophia, symbols of the land's MEDIEVAL empire. Scattered about are toys (representing INTRIGUE). The toy bear wears a crown similar to the king's, implying a threat (representing ENEMY). The emperor holds a *fasces*, symbol of Roman power, now passed to him.**

DID YOU FIND THE EAGLE EYE? IT IS ON PAGE 28!

# ASK AWAY!

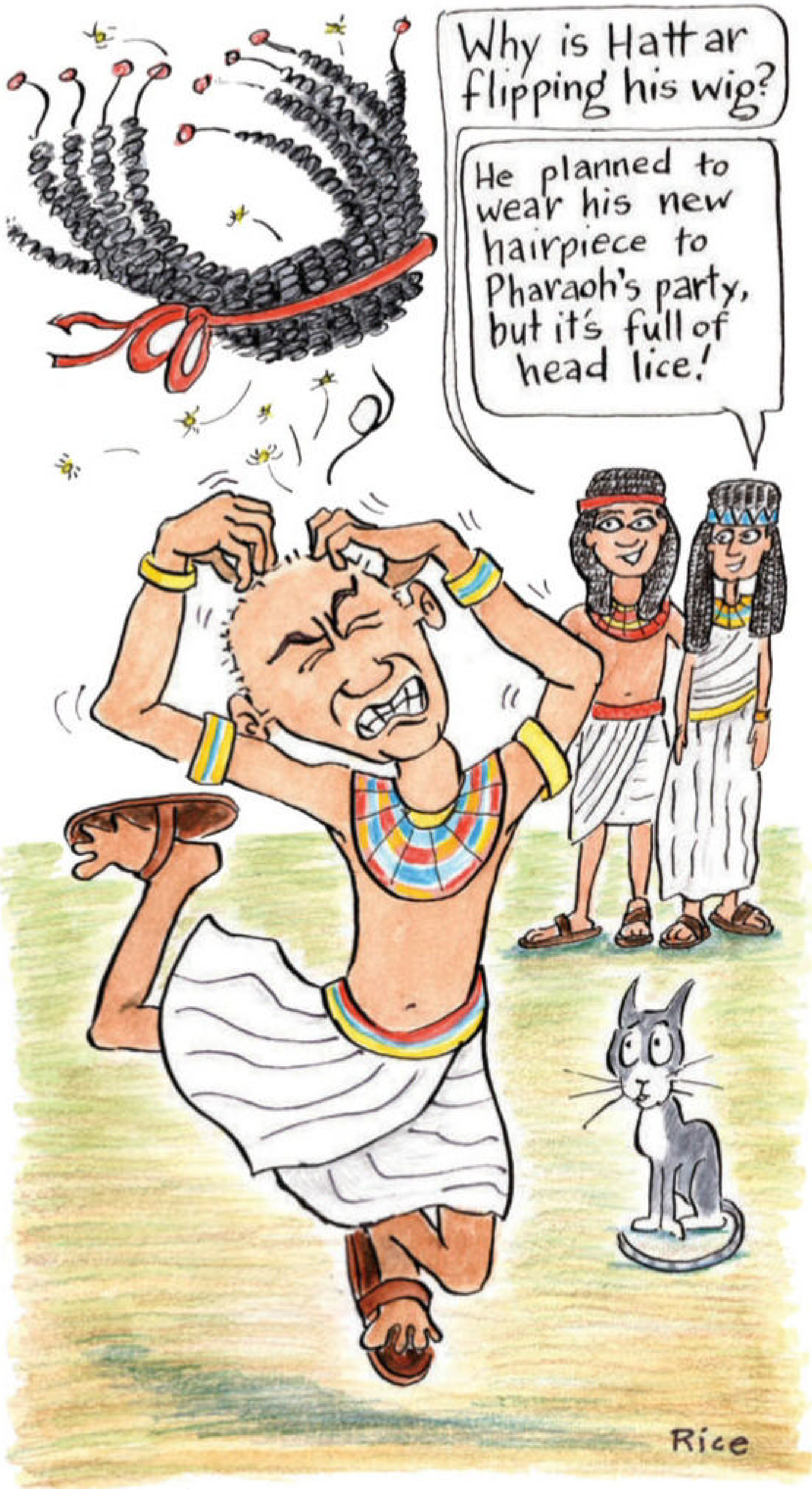
**Have questions about world history, archaeology, paleontology? Dr. Dig and Calliope are ready to answer them.**

### **Q** Do archaeologists ever keep artifacts they find? Did they in the past, if not now?

— Maggie, Web post

**A** TODAY, ANY ancient material is understood to belong to the country in which it was found. Governments have departments that handle the storage, preservation, and protection of artifacts. They also cooperate with law enforcement to recover artifacts that have been excavated without permission. Therefore, archaeologists must obey the laws and turn over their materials to the governments. In the past, laws were not as strict as they are today. Many governments allowed archaeologists and, in particular, the organizations that sponsored them (usually museums in Europe or the United States) to keep some portion of what they found while excavating. Even earlier, wealthy individuals or families would sponsor excavations and keep artifacts for their own collections.

— *Calliope*


Why is Hattar flipping his wig?
He planned to wear his new hairpiece to Pharaoh's party, but it's full of head lice!
Rice

**by Sue Rice**

### **Q** How do archaeologists know where to dig? — especially if it is an area where no one has dug before?

— Charlie, Web post

**A** IN MOST cases, there is ample evidence of human activity visible on the surface before any excavation actually takes place. Structures might still be standing — or, at least, remains of structures. Surface surveys that involve walking across the area and identifying the size of pottery-fragment remains in different places can locate former centers of activity. Sometimes, artifacts are uncovered by accident, as, for example, at construction sites. Satellite imagery can identify archaeological structures, such as walls, graves, or entire cities, when they are so covered with vegetation that they cannot be seen from the ground. Aerial views often can reveal their outlines.

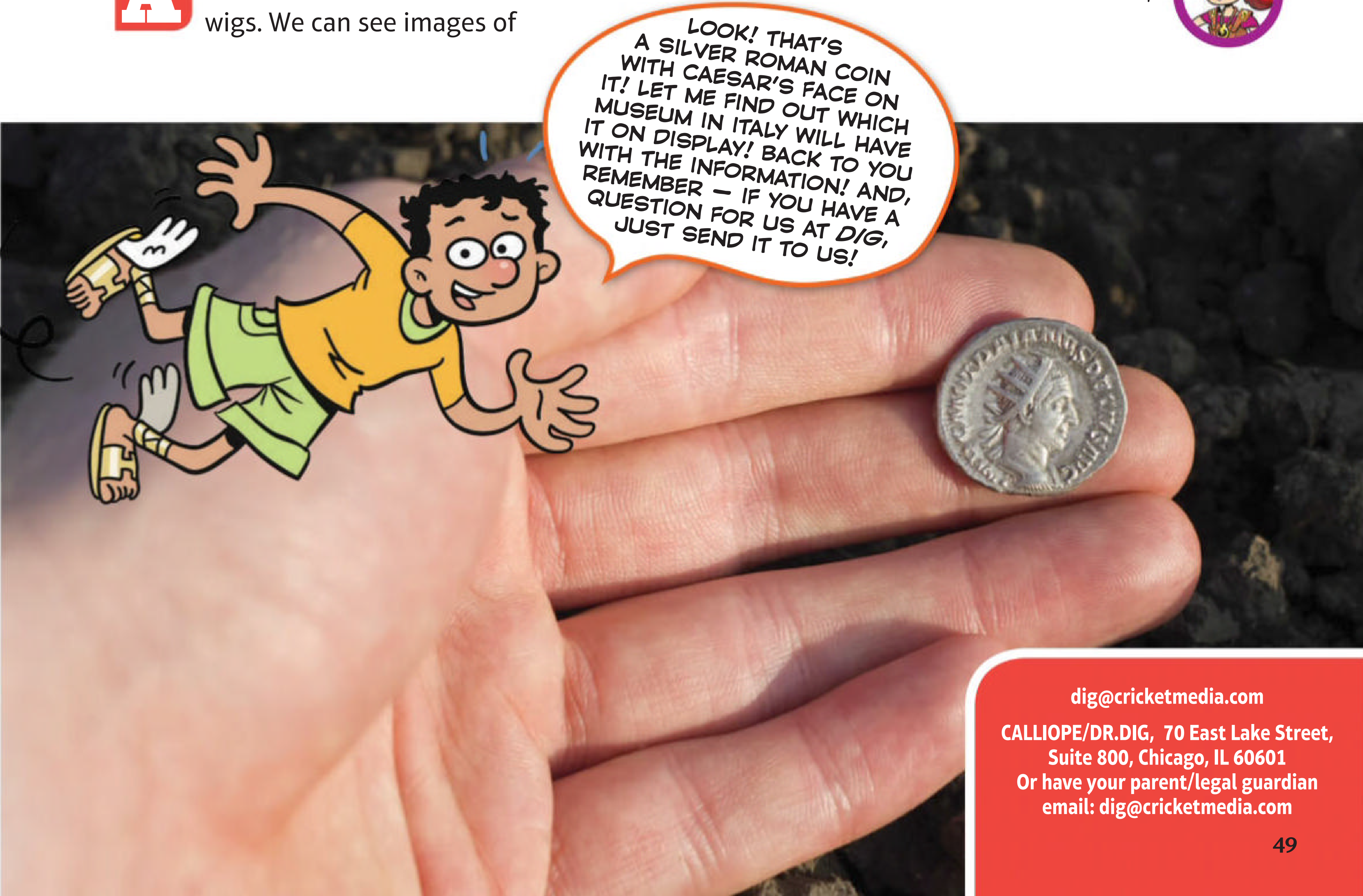
— Dr. Dig

**Q** **Did the ancient Egyptians wear wigs? Weren't they really hot in summer? How did they make them?**

— Milo, Web post

**A** ANCIENT EGYPTIANS definitely wore wigs. We can see images of this over and over again in their sculptures and paintings. Actual examples of wigs have survived and been recovered in tombs. Very often, the ancient Egyptians cut their real hair short because of the hot weather. Additionally, in ancient societies, head lice were common. For this reason, the Egyptians saw long hair as impractical. For fancy or ritual events, such as parties or ceremonies, wigs were worn. These were often elaborately braided or styled, sometimes with beads or other ornaments. The best wigs were made of human hair, but cheaper versions could be made of such materials as flax fibers or wool. They were sewn together in much the same fashion as wigs are today.

— Calliope

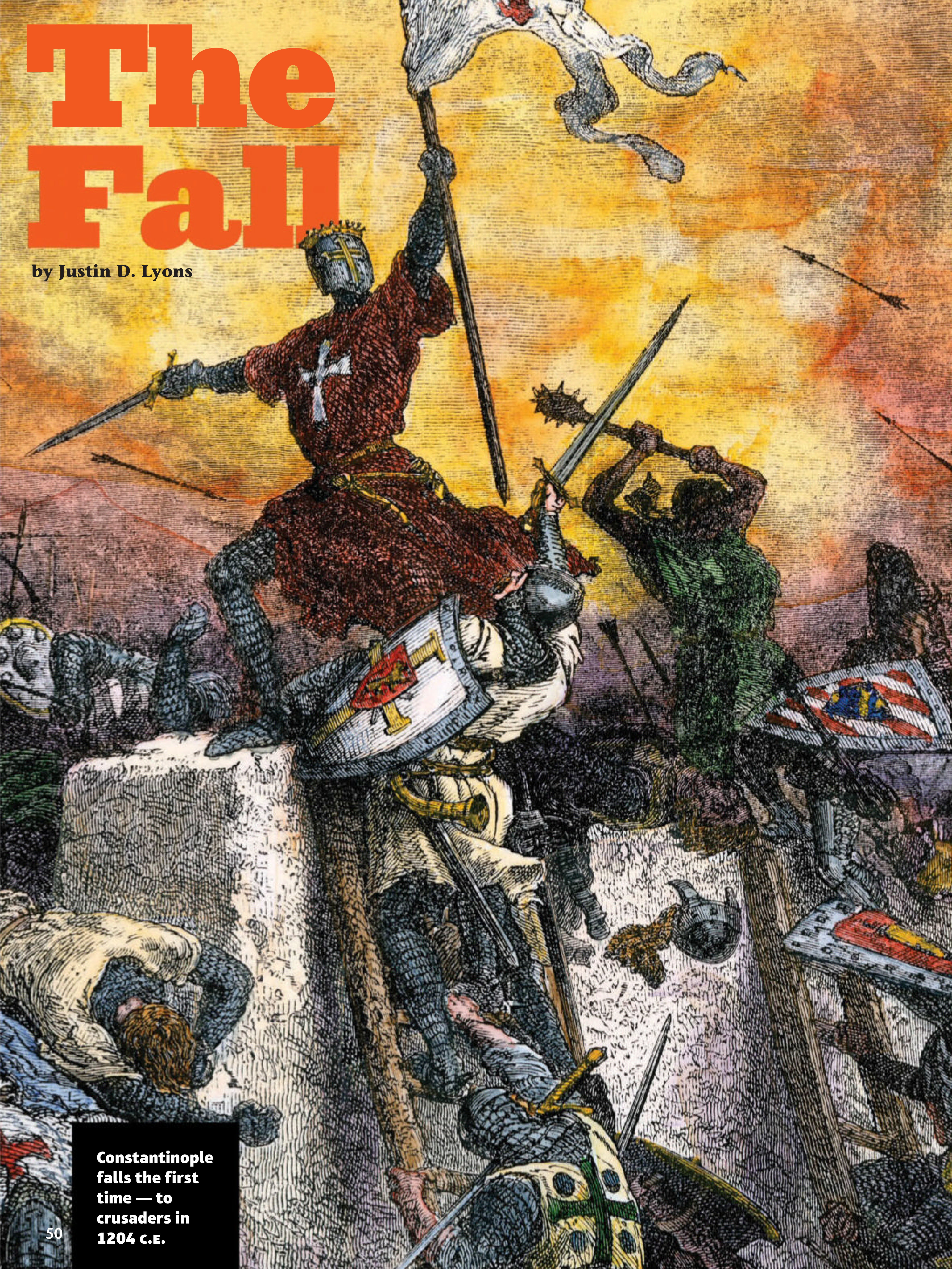

LOOK! THAT'S A SILVER ROMAN COIN WITH CAESAR'S FACE ON IT! LET ME FIND OUT WHICH MUSEUM IN ITALY WILL HAVE IT ON DISPLAY! BACK TO YOU WITH THE INFORMATION! AND, REMEMBER — IF YOU HAVE A QUESTION FOR US AT DIG, JUST SEND IT TO US!

dig@cricketmedia.com

CALLIOPE/DR.DIG, 70 East Lake Street,
Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60601
Or have your parent/legal guardian
email: dig@cricketmedia.com

# The Fall

by Justin D. Lyons



**Constantinople falls the first time — to crusaders in 1204 C.E.**

Although Constantinople was besieged many times in its thousand-year history, the city fell to attackers only twice. The first time was in 1204 C.E., when the city was captured and sacked by the armies of the Fourth Crusade (see image opposite). The second time was in 1453 C.E., when the armies of Mehmed II, Sultan of the Ottoman Turks, conquered the city and took possession of it. The Ottomans made Constantinople the capital of their own growing empire, renamed it Istanbul, and brought the long story of the Byzantine Empire to an end.

## The Fourth Crusade

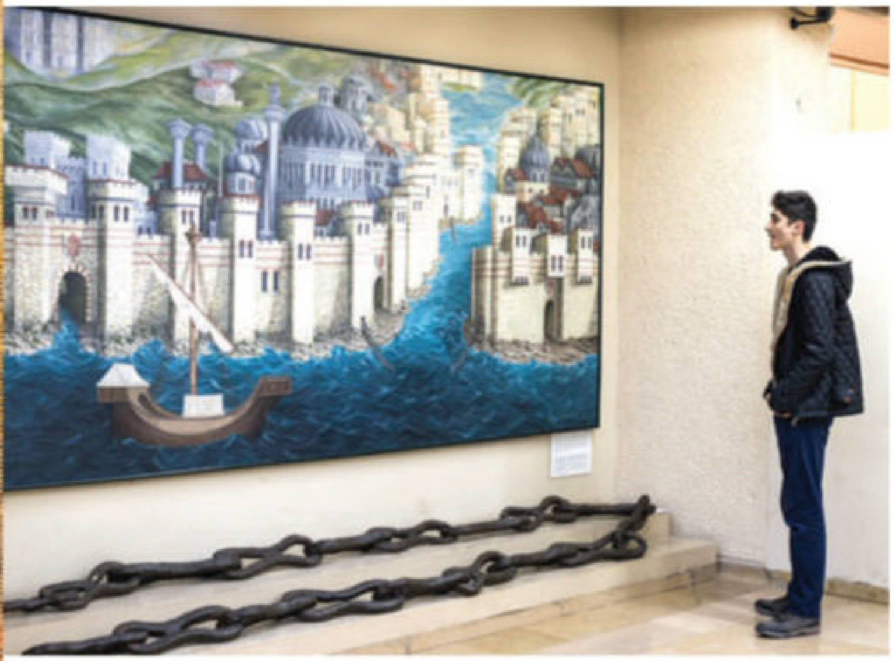
Ironically, the movement that brought the armies of the Fourth Crusade to Constantinople was originally intended to aid the Byzantine Empire against its enemies. The erosion of Byzantine control in Asia had accelerated with the arrival of the Seljuk Turks in the region. At the Battle of Manzikert in 1071 C.E., the Byzantines met defeat, and Emperor Romanos IV Diogenes was captured. These events severely weakened the empire. Aware of the seriousness of the situation, Emperor Alexios I Komnenus asked the West for help in reclaiming its lost territory and delivering the Christian holy places from Islamic control. The Crusades were the result.

While there was tension between the empire in the East and the armies coming to help from the West ever since the First Crusade began in 1095 C.E., East and West still managed to support each other reasonably well for a time. However, unlike the first three Crusades, the Fourth did not pursue its intended purpose, which was to attack Islamic power. Instead, it became involved in the financial schemes of a trading partner, the Italian city of Venice. It also became involved in Byzantine disputes over who should inherit the throne. The disputes ended with the sack of the greatest Christian city in the East. The Latin Empire of Constantinople was created, and it lasted until 1261 C.E. In that year, the Greeks recaptured the city and restored the imperial dynasty. But the city would never fully recover its strength.

## The Last Gasp

By the 15th century, Constantinople and the Byzantine Empire were but shadows of their former glory. The city remained a bastion of Christian Europe against Islamic power in Asia. It was also facing its most powerful opponent yet, the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Turks came to power in Asia Minor in the early 14th century. They expanded their territory rapidly and soon developed the administrative, economic, and military strength to seriously test Byzantine control and spread into Europe. Constantinople became an island within a stormy Turkish sea.

When Mehmed II came to the Ottoman throne in 1451, he resolved to conquer Constantinople. But, even in its reduced state, conquering the city would be no easy task. Enclosed by a defensive circuit of 14 miles of walls that was reinforced by more than 400 towers and many fortresses, it had withstood many attacks. The landward walls were a triple row of massive fortifications that had been built during the reign of Theodosius II (408–450 C.E.) and stretched across the peninsula. The seaward approaches were also guarded by impressive walls that rose directly from the water. The Golden Horn, Constantinople's harbor to the north, was able to be blocked against enemy ships by a great barrier chain that could be stretched across the



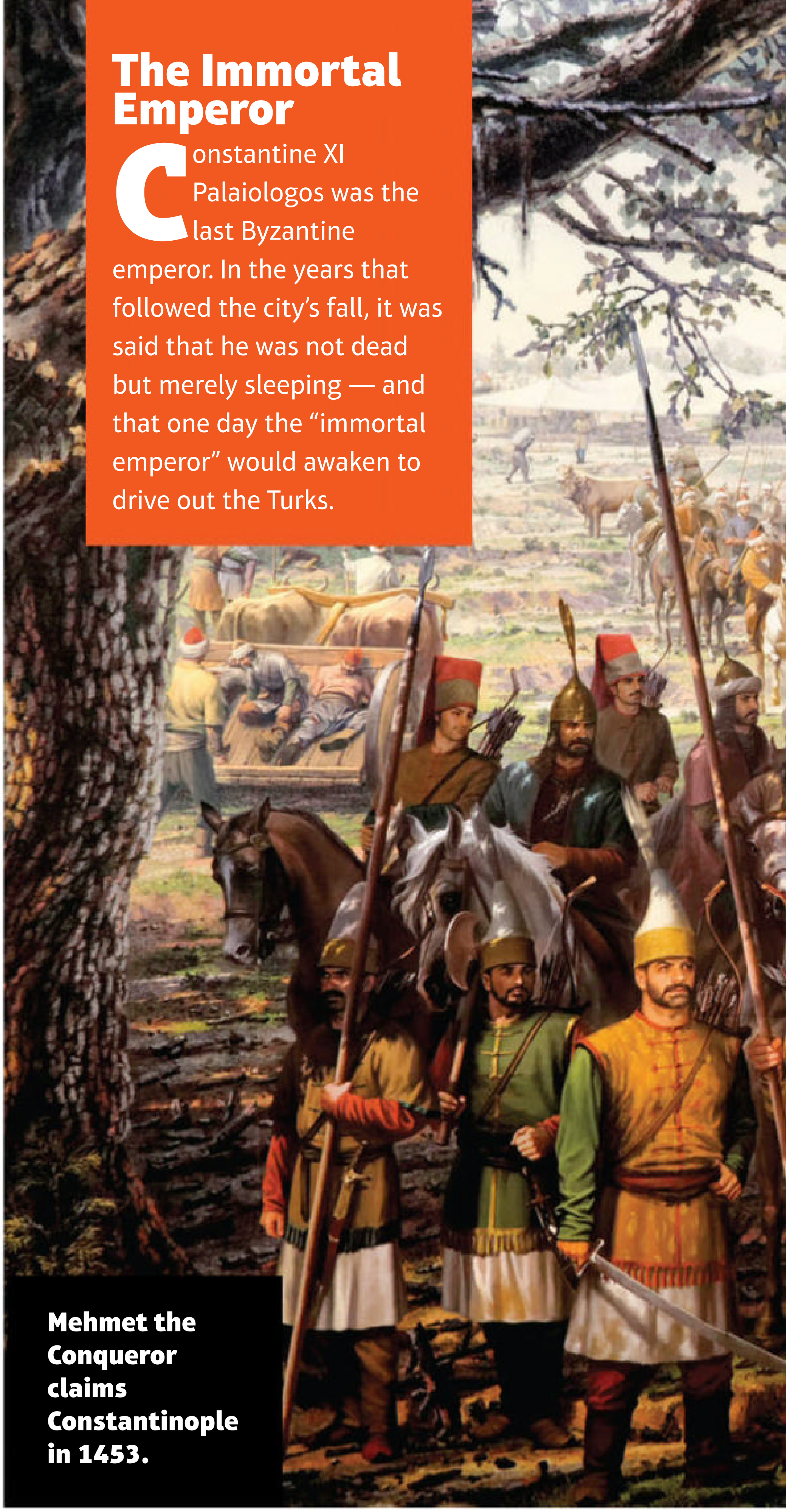
opening and anchored by the Castle of Galata on the northern bank. The photo above, taken in a museum in Istanbul today, shows a painting of Constantinople at the time when the chain was used, with a portion of the chain that has survived below.

## Determination Plus!

Mehmed knew the difficulties he faced and made careful preparations for the attack. Turkish fortresses were built on both sides of the Bosporus to prevent supplies and reinforcements from reaching the city. In addition, he assembled a massive force of 80,000 men and a fleet of 300 to 400 ships. To be sure, this was a formidable threat. But the Ottoman army was determined to win, and they had a weapon that matched their determination: large-caliber siege cannon. Created for the Ottomans by a Hungarian named Urban, these cannon would blast to fragments ramparts that no troops could overcome.

## The Immortal Emperor

Constantine XI Palaiologos was the last Byzantine emperor. In the years that followed the city's fall, it was said that he was not dead but merely sleeping — and that one day the "immortal emperor" would awaken to drive out the Turks.

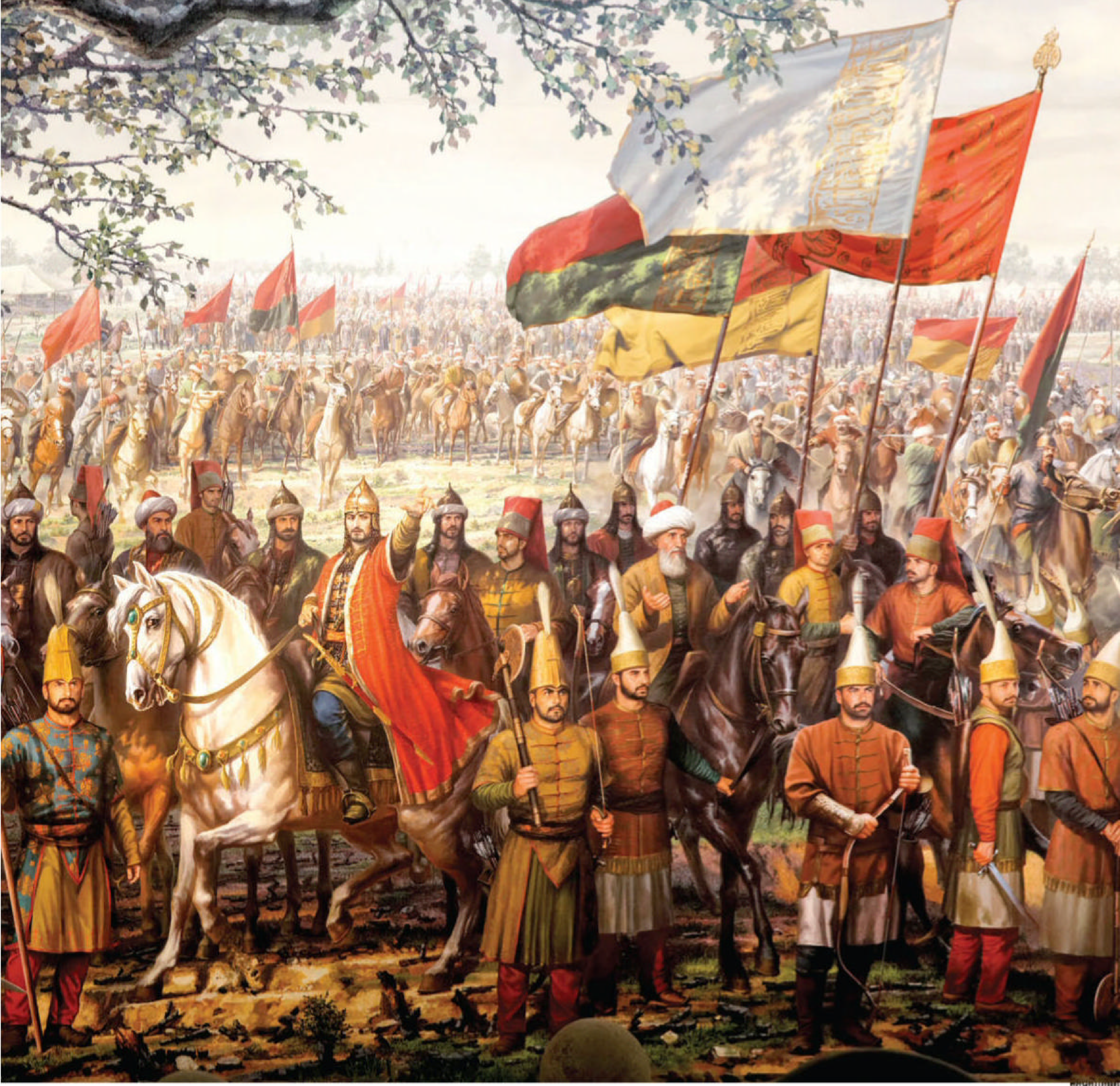


**Mehmet the Conqueror claims Constantinople in 1453.**

For weeks, the Turks bombarded the city, breaching the outer fortifications and hammering at the inner defenses. The defenders, numbering only 7,000 to 8,000 men, were stretched very thin upon the long walls. Their ranks gradually decreased as casualties, sickness, and desertion took their toll. Under constant assault by day and hauling stone, bricks, and timber to close the breaches by night, they were exhausted almost beyond endurance. Then, Mehmed bypassed the barrier chain by hauling 70 of his ships overland to launch them upon the Golden Horn. His actions added an additional five miles of sea wall the defenders of Constantinople now had to protect. The end was close at hand.

## Super Cannon

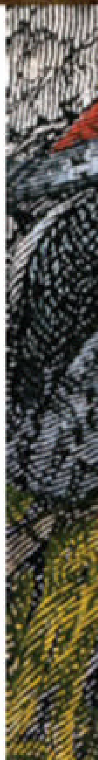
One cannon used in the 1453 siege of Constantinople was enormous. Twenty-seven feet long, it could hurl a 1,200-pound ball more than a mile. It took two hours to load and could only fire eight rounds per day.



## And Then It Came!

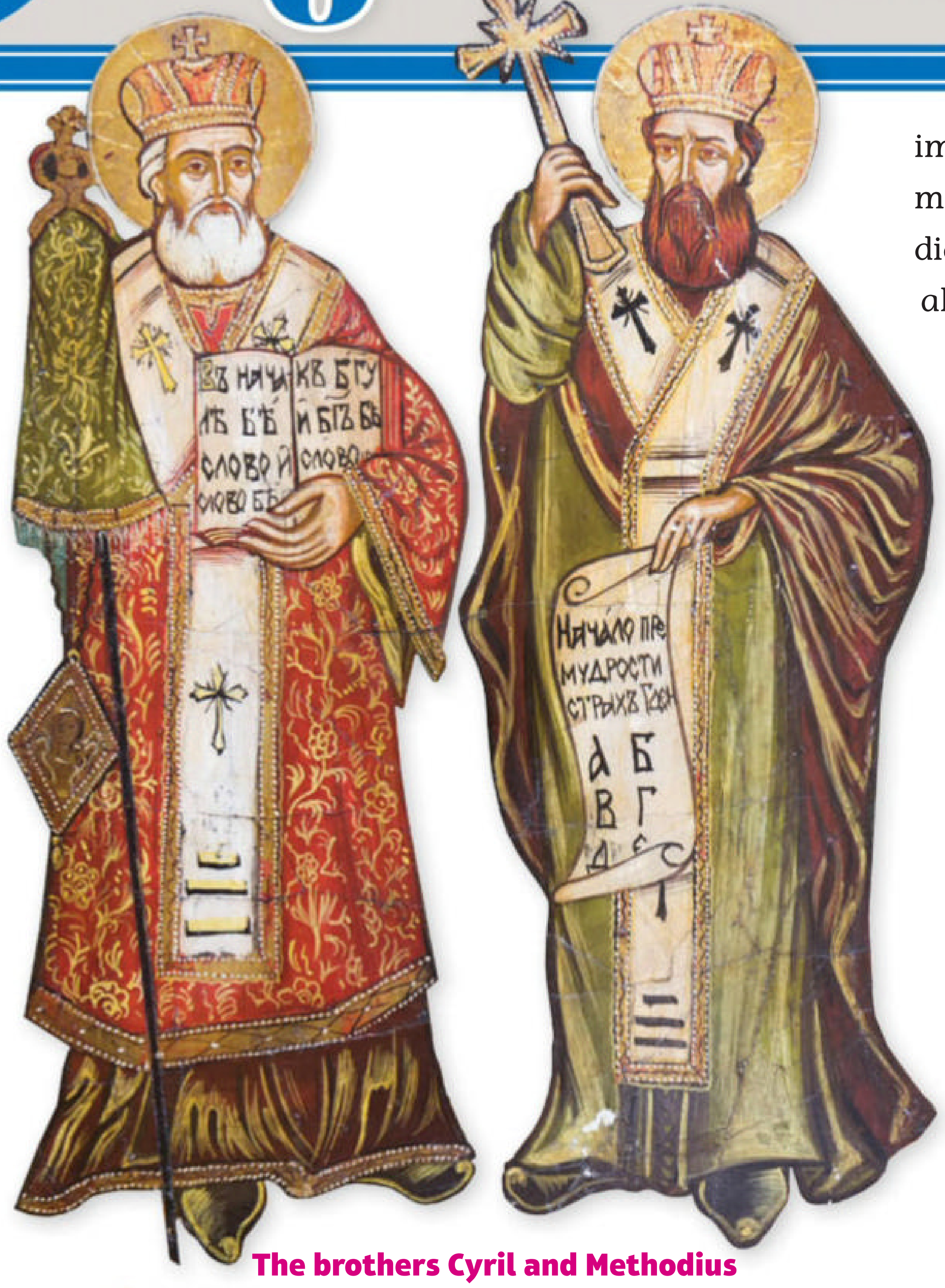
On May 29, 1453, about 300 Turkish soldiers entered the city through a smoking and rubble-strewn breach blown in the inner wall. When they appeared behind the garrison, panic spread quickly, and the defense collapsed. A few managed to flee the city, but most were cut down. The emperor himself, Constantine XI, fighting as a common soldier, was killed defending the breach.

For seven weeks, the Byzantines had held out against impossible odds, but the end had come. Mehmed the Conqueror rode on a white horse through the streets to claim his prize (see illustration above). About 90 percent of the population was sold into slavery. Soon after, Constantinople became Istanbul, capital of the Ottomans. The Byzantine Empire, which stretched back to antiquity and the glories of Rome, had come to an end.



# The Legacy of an Empire

by Regina Hansen



The brothers Cyril and Methodius

The legacy of the Byzantine Empire is visible today, both on a grand scale and in little-seen areas. The religion of Byzantium, also referred to as Orthodox Christianity, dominates the Slavic countries of Russia, Bulgaria, and many parts of the former Yugoslavia, as well as Greece and Romania. Orthodox Christianity was introduced by the Byzantine monks Cyril and Methodius (see image at left), who first went north as missionaries in 864 C.E. But Cyril and Methodius did not just bring religion. They also created an alphabet that allowed them to translate the Bible and other texts into the Slavic languages.

Known as Cyrillic, the alphabet is still used throughout Russia and most Slavic countries. The development of this alphabet did help with the spread of literacy in the area. Universal literacy, however, was not achieved for many centuries.

## In Russia

The Byzantine Empire also influenced the formation of the Russian government, at least until the Revolution of 1917. After the Fall of Constantinople in 1453, Grand Prince Ivan III of Moscow took the title *tsar* (the Russian word for "Caesar" or "emperor"). He did so as a way to make known his belief that he was the inheritor of Byzantine power and that Russia was the "third Rome" and the defender of Christianity against the Turks. The term "tsar" remained the popular (and sometimes official) title of Russian leaders until the Revolution.

## In Legal Codes

Byzantium's legal legacy is also well known (see pages 30–33). In the mid-sixth century C.E., the Byzantine emperor Justinian ordered the organization of all Roman laws into a 50-volume written code. It became known as the Code of Justinian or the *Codex Justinianus.* While it was not the first set of codified laws, it did become the basis for the Code of Canon Law of the Catholic Church. Eventually, it influenced systems of civil law throughout much of Europe and even Japan. It did not influence American law, however. Rather than being codified, American law is based on precedent.

## In Architecture

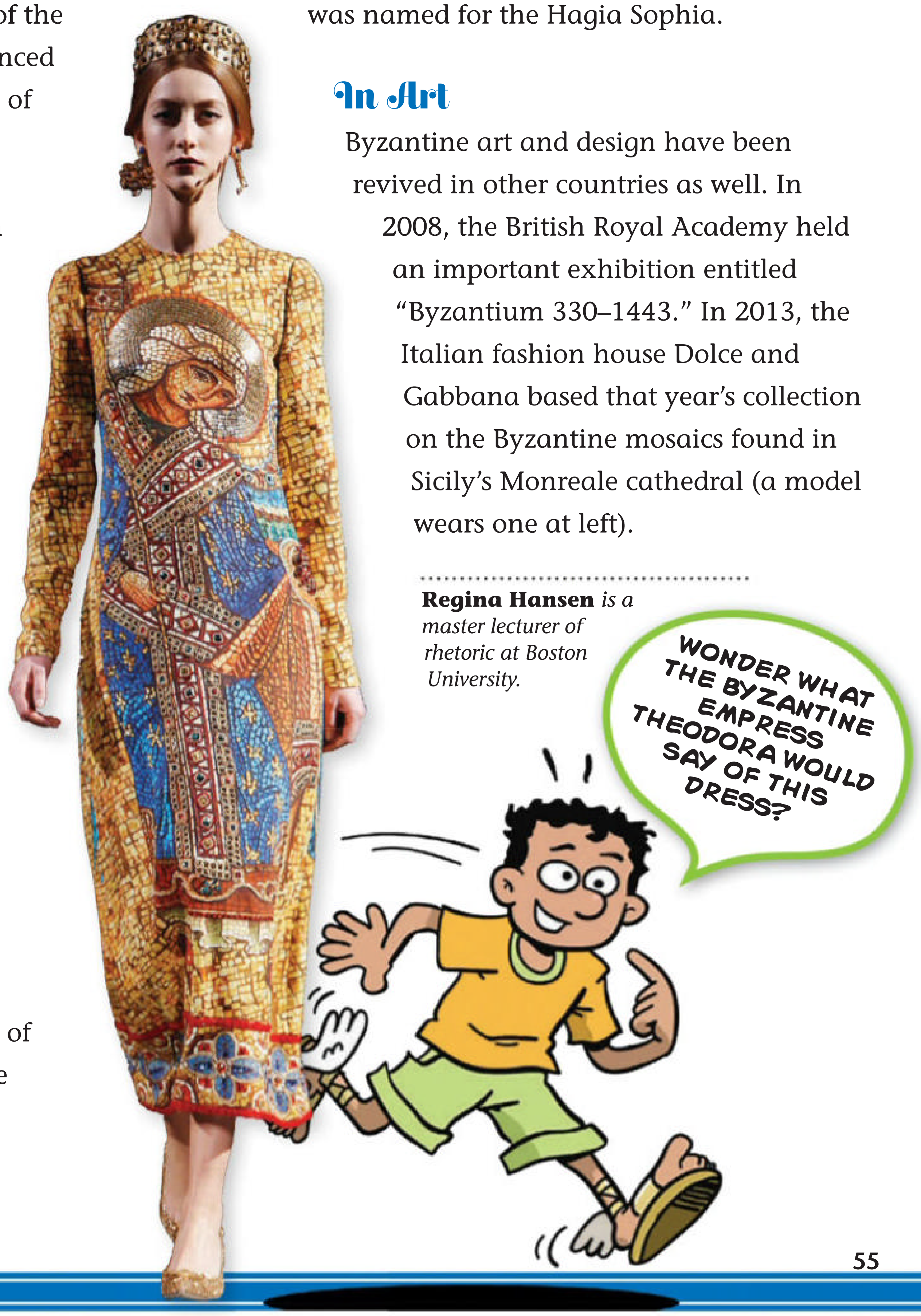
Today, in Turkey, history is mostly known through movies and television. Yet, Byzantine influence can be seen in art and architecture. One of the most famous buildings in Istanbul is the **Hagia Sophia** (see page 41). Completed in 537 as the Church of Saint Sophia, it is now a museum whose Byzantine mosaics are known throughout the world.

The religion of the Byzantine missionaries also influenced the architecture of eastern and southern Europe. In the city of Kiev, the capital of present-day Ukraine, churches survive that were built by Byzantine architects after that city's conversion to Christianity. Among these is the 11th-century Cathedral of Saint Sophia. It was named for the Hagia Sophia.

**Hagia Sophia is actually Greek for "Holy Wisdom."**

## In Art

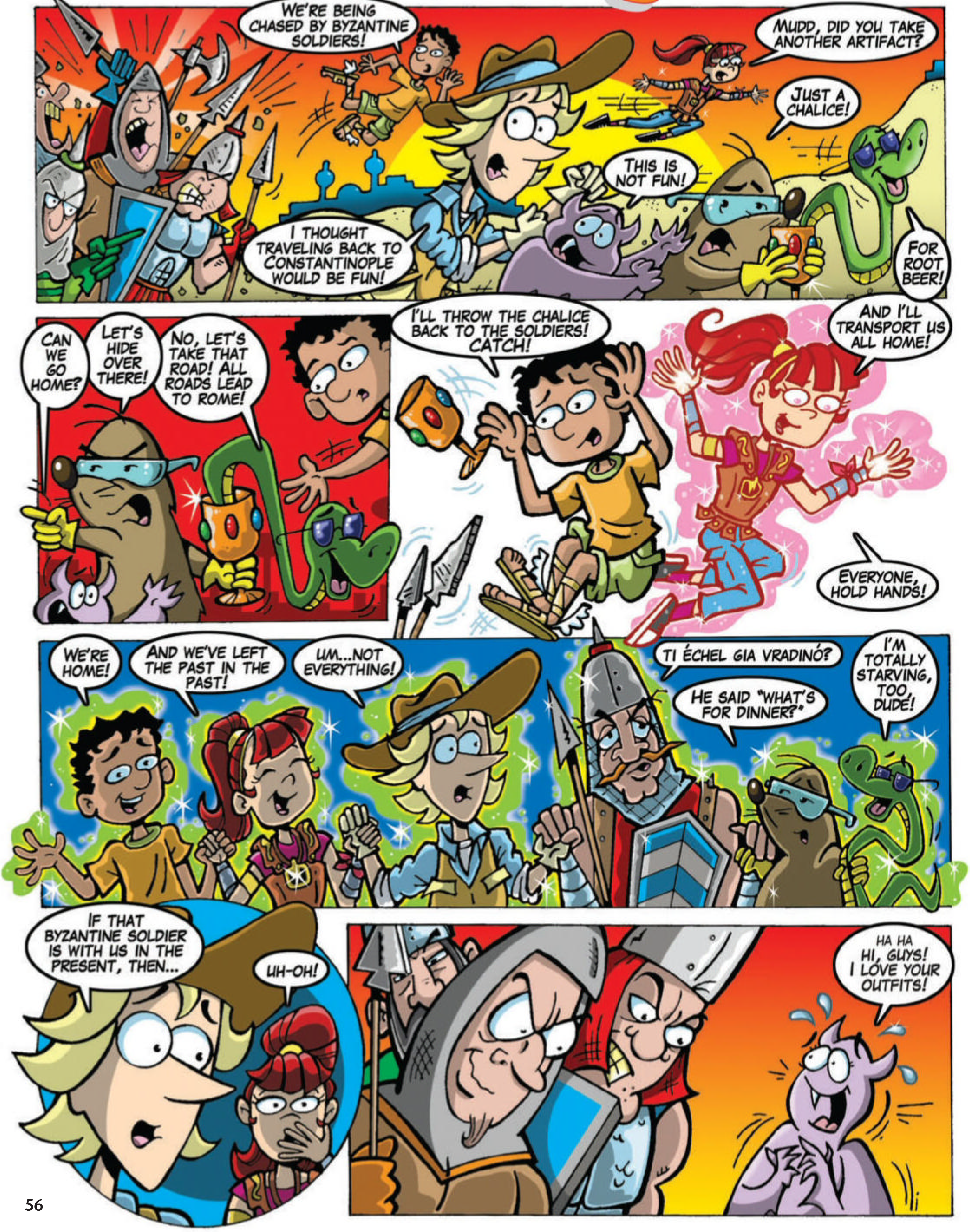
Byzantine art and design have been revived in other countries as well. In 2008, the British Royal Academy held an important exhibition entitled "Byzantium 330–1443." In 2013, the Italian fashion house Dolce and Gabbana based that year's collection on the Byzantine mosaics found in Sicily's Monreale cathedral (a model wears one at left).


WONDER WHAT THE BYZANTINE EMPRESS THEODORA WOULD SAY OF THIS DRESS?

**Regina Hansen** *is a master lecturer of rhetoric at Boston University.*

# THE ADVENTURES OF dr. dig

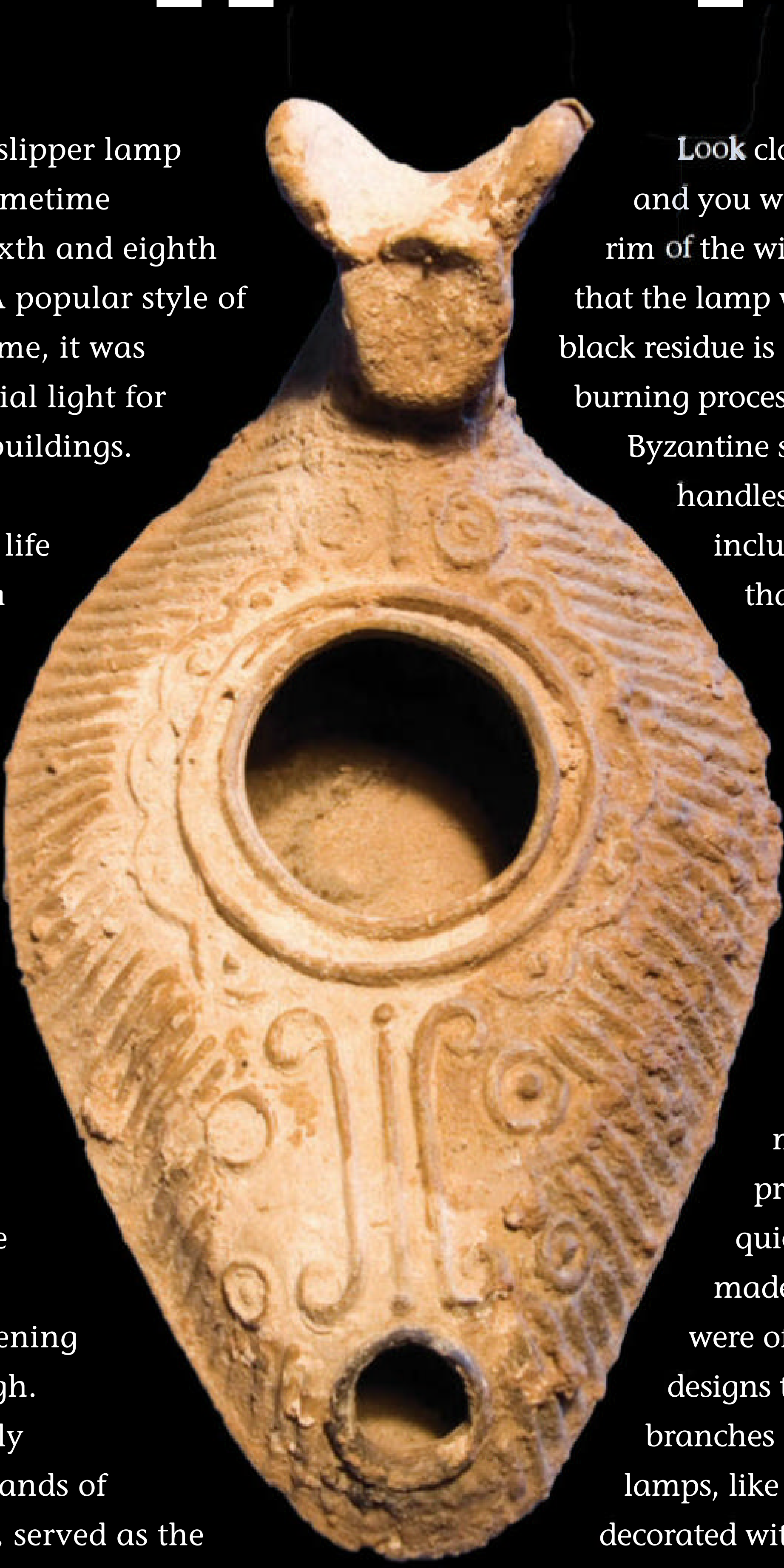
BY CHRIS SABATINO


WE'RE BEING CHASED BY BYZANTINE SOLDIERS!
I THOUGHT TRAVELING BACK TO CONSTANTINOPLE WOULD BE FUN!
THIS IS NOT FUN!
MUDD, DID YOU TAKE ANOTHER ARTIFACT?
JUST A CHALICE!
FOR ROOT BEER!
CAN WE GO HOME?
LET'S HIDE OVER THERE!
NO, LET'S TAKE THAT ROAD! ALL ROADS LEAD TO ROME!
I'LL THROW THE CHALICE BACK TO THE SOLDIERS! CATCH!
AND I'LL TRANSPORT US ALL HOME!
EVERYONE, HOLD HANDS!
WE'RE HOME!
AND WE'VE LEFT THE PAST IN THE PAST!
UM...NOT EVERYTHING!
TI ÉCHEL GIA VRADINÓ?
HE SAID "WHAT'S FOR DINNER?"
I'M TOTALLY STARVING, TOO, DUDE!
IF THAT BYZANTINE SOLDIER IS WITH US IN THE PRESENT, THEN...
UH-OH!
HA HA HI, GUYS! I LOVE YOUR OUTFITS!

# Slipper Lamp

This Byzantine slipper lamp was created sometime between the sixth and eighth centuries C.E. A popular style of oil-burning lamp at the time, it was designed to provide artificial light for homes, shops, and other buildings. Oil-burning lamps were a central part of day-to-day life in the Mediterranean area from about 1500 B.C.E. As such, they are one of the most commonly found artifacts in archaeological sites throughout the region.

The name of these small clay lamps came from their slipper-like shape. Each featured a large central fill-hole into which fuel — usually olive oil — was poured and a narrow nozzle with an opening for the wick to pass through. Wicks, which were typically fashioned from twisted strands of linen or other plant fibers, served as the lamps' fuel delivery system.



Look closely at the photo here, and you will see black soot on the rim of the wick hole. The soot shows that the lamp was used, because the fine black residue is a natural part of the burning process. Although most Byzantine slipper lamps lack handles, this slipper lamp included a handle at the rear that made it easier to carry. These lamps were manufactured in molds instead of being formed by hand or thrown on a pottery wheel. Mold-made clay lamps first appeared in the Mediterranean region in the third century B.C.E. Impressing the lamps into molds allowed them to be produced in large quantities quickly and cheaply. Mold-made Byzantine slipper lamps were often decorated with raised designs that depicted palm branches or crosses. Some slipper lamps, like the one shown here, were decorated with abstract designs such as circles and lines.

**—Louise Chipley Slavicek**